

BANDWAGON



JANUARY-FEBRUARY 1986



THE JOURNAL OF THE CIRCUS HISTORICAL SOCIETY

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THIS MONTHS COVER

This month's cover is a tribute to the 1985 circus season, which is reviewed in this issue. Here, Patricia White puts one of the Carson and Barnes liberty horses through its paces at Milwaukee during the Great Circus Parade last July. Photograph by Holton Rower.

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1986 CHS CONVENTION

Make your plans now to attend the 1986 Circus Historical Society convention, which will be held in conjunction with the Great Circus Parade in Milwaukee, Wisconsin, from July 9 to July 13. Festivities will begin on Wednesday, July 9, with the arrival of the Carson and Barnes Circus in the morning, and the

Great Circus Train in the afternoon, and conclude with the Great Circus Parade on Sunday, July 13. In between, a number of special features are planned, including a behind-the-scenes tour of the Carson and Barnes Circus conducted by show personnel and a tour of the Circus World Museum's historic parade wagons by the man who tracked most of them down, C.P. "Chappie" Fox. Other events include historical presentations, discussions with contemporary showmen, historical circus films, the Carson and Barnes Circus, and the fourth annual CHS Circuiana Auction. Negotiations are underway with a number of Milwaukee hotels for a discount convention rate. Full details on hotel and convention registration will appear in the March-April issues of *Bandwagon*. Those wishing to give historical presentations should contact Fred Pfening III, 2315 Haverford Road, Columbus, Ohio 43220, as soon as possible to assure a spot on what promises to be a very crowded program. This convention will be one of the biggest and best meetings the CHS has ever had and is definitely one you will not want to miss.

1985 CHS ELECTION RESULTS

President:	
Fred Pfening III	205
Albert Conover	1
John Fugate	1
Vice-President:	
Greg Parkinson	201
Bill Brinley	1
Marv Krieger	1
Secretary-Treasurer:	
Johann Dahlinger	202
Directors:	
Division 1: Fred Pfening Jr.	28
Richard Deptula	9
Bedford South	1
Joanne Joys	1
Division 2: Copeland MacAllister	26
Division 3: William Rhodes	42
Porter Hemphill	1
Division 4: Joseph T. Bradbury	19
Division 5: Robert L. Parkinson	36
Marv Gauger	1
Division 6: Jim McRoberts	11
Division 7: Joe Rettinger	7
Division 8: Chang Reynolds	20
Don Marcks	1
Division 9: Gordon Brown	1
Total Votes	208

Respectfully submitted,
George M. Morrison
January 24, 1986

**PLEASE DO NOT SEND
DUES AHEAD OF NOTICE.**

THE PRESIDENT COMMENTS

I am greatly honored to have been elected the fourteenth president of the Circus Historical Society, and I shall do my utmost to justify the members' decision. The CHS faces a number of challenges which must be addressed before drastic action is required. The most serious of these is money, the shortage of which is chronic for organizations such as ours. A number of options have been considered including raising the dues. After consultation with the Secretary-Treasurer and the *Bandwagon* editor, I have decided against increasing the membership fee for at least this year. As an alternative, a number of steps have been taken, or will be taken shortly which I hope will increase the number of members, and thereby increase our revenue. We have begun exchanging membership ads with other publications. *Circus Reports* has run our ad with excellent results for the last few months, and we hope to soon have ads in other circus-related magazines. Further, Secretary-Treasurer Johann Dahlinger will be mailing a packet of material including an application blank to new members of the CFA and CMB who do not belong to the CHS, and we hope to make a trial mailing to some current CFA members who are not members of our organization. Both the Secretary-Treasurer and myself have application blanks available which we

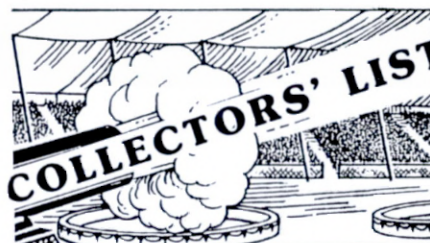
would be most happy to send to members to sign up new recruits. A similar plea for new members was made in 1976 which resulted in sixty-eight new additions to our roster in just four months. I see no reason why we can't do better this time.

The *Bandwagon* has been bigger and better than ever the last few years. The size of each issue is determined mainly by our financial situation, and as a result of sharp financial management, profitable conventions, voluntary contributions with the dues, and our highly successful circusiana auctions we have been able to increase the number of pages in the magazine without increasing the dues. We cannot depend, however, on these sources of income to finance the CHS year after year. For example, the \$2400 raised at the circusiana auction at last year's convention generated roughly the same amount of money as a \$2.00 dues increase; the year before the auction generated about the equivalent of a \$1.00 increase. Dues have not been raised since 1982, but without the extra income from the conventions and the auctions we would have had to either increase dues or cut back dramatically on the size of the *Bandwagon*.

If we want to continue having a high quality magazine of which we can all be proud, we simply must place ourselves in a more solid financial position. This can be done most painlessly by increasing

the membership base. Each page of the *Bandwagon* costs approximately \$130, which means that every eight new members translates into a page of the magazine we could not afford otherwise. I strongly encourage all members to write either Johann Dahlinger or myself for applications.

Fred Pfening III



**MISCELLANEOUS
LITHOS, PROGRAMS**
Send S.A.S.E. to

Mary Jane Price
4102 Idaho Ave.
Nashville, TN 37209



WE NEED YOU!

The Circus World Museum and the Great Circus Parade Office need the help of CFA and CHS members! We are seeking newspaper clippings from coast to coast of the 1986 Great Circus Parade for future use. Please assist us by providing clippings from your local newspaper and sending them to:

Great Circus Parade Office
811 East Wisconsin Avenue
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We thank you for your support of the Circus World Museum and the Great Circus Parade!

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The Circus Year in Review

1985 Season

By Fred D. Pfenning III



Liability insurance and phone promotion created serious difficulties for the circus industry in 1985. While business was generally good, these problems, along with harassment from animal rights groups, labor shortages, and rising costs, made the season a disquieting one for many operators.

"It's the biggest crisis that the circus business has ever faced," stated veteran producer George Hubler, speaking of the cost and availability of liability insurance. For a number of reasons, including declining interest rates and large settlements on claims, the cost of coverage went through the roof not only for circuses, but for businesses of all types. Circuses' problems were compounded by the limited number of carriers that specialize in show business insurance. During the summer, one insurance company unilaterally dropped coverage on a number of tented shows, creating a hectic scramble to find new insurance. Those who succeeded paid premiums many times higher than before, particularly if they owned wild animals. One large tent's new coverage was reported to cost \$1000 a day. Some shows were forced to drop their total protection to \$1,000,000 from the usual \$2,000,000 to \$5,000,000 in order to buy coverage.

The insurance crisis created two severe problems. First, it greatly increased the cost of doing business and cut into profits as the larger expense could not be passed on to the public. Second, and more importantly, it estranged sponsors, many of whom would not risk booking a show that might be under-insured. Were an accident to occur while under their auspices, they might be held liable if the circus did not have adequate coverage. A few shows tried "going naked"—the term for doing busi-

ness without coverage—after their insurance was cancelled and were forced out of engagements when the sponsors asked to see their insurance certificate.

Independent acts also had trouble with insurance. The rates for trained elephant owners, for example, went up substantially, partially because of the perceived risk of a patron being injured during the elephant ride. This created the specter for bullmen of not being able to conduct the elephant ride, a significant source of income. Even worse, if they could not obtain insurance, was the possibility that they might be unable to get bookings. Other wild animal and high risk acts had similar experiences. So serious was the problem that some warned that it could severely limit the number of animal acts on circuses.

At year's end, operators were discussing the formation of their own captive insurance company to deal with the situation. A nationwide problem, the liability insurance issue almost certainly will worsen in 1986 and ultimately may take federal action to remedy.

Abuse of phone promotion, the time honored method of selling tickets on sponsored dates, also plagued reputable circus men as a very few tented shows, and one in particular, left a trail of disgruntled sponsors along their routes. Among the charges leveled against this show were that it altered contracts without the sponsors' knowledge; that it did not live up to the provisions of its contract, particularly in regard to its monetary obligations to the sponsor; that it misled the public into thinking that ticket purchases were benefiting handicapped children; that it did not pay phone solicitors' wages, phone bills, boiler room rental, and other expenses; and

The Carson and Barnes Circus played to huge audiences during their three days in Milwaukee during the Great Circus Parade. John Polacsek photo.

that it threatened a sponsor's representative when he demanded the service club's portion of the proceeds. Some service clubs filed lawsuits against this show's promotional arms, and attorneys general officials in Maine, Vermont, Massachusetts, and New York filed both civil and criminal charges against the enterprise. A Massachusetts court ordered it to pay \$130,000 in fines and restitution for deceptive business practices, and prohibited the organization from producing shows in that state for four years. Newspaper articles in Massachusetts, Michigan, and New Jersey made the public aware of the situation. Many states considered legislation to crack down on charity phone solicitations, while others investigated alleged violations of existing laws.

The implications of all this damaged the industry as a whole. One show owner wrote that the business had "no greater threat than that of the callous circus operator. ... No matter what the trade name of a circus, the *only* name the sponsors or the public ever remember is CIRCUS." Local service or fraternal groups' use of circuses as a fund raising vehicle has been the life blood of the industry for years, and it is doubtful that many shows would survive if that connection were severed. Many showmen believed that service clubs which had been cheated in the past would be less likely to engage a circus in the future, thus making it more difficult for them to find sponsors. Like insurance, this problem gave no signs of resolution at year's end.

A third area of concern was continued harassment by animal rights groups. In the season's most celebrated animal rights incident, the ASPCA's charged that the Ringling show's unicorns were not really unicorns backfired as the circus was cleared of any wrong doing by the Department of Agriculture, and got miles of newspaper copy out of the event. In New Jersey, a municipal court ruled in favor of the Beatty show on charges brought against it by the New Jersey SPCA when the circus was found to be in complete compliance with state laws regarding wild animals. In this case, the judge admonished SPCA officials for acting irresponsibly. When Ford Bros. lost a giraffe, animal rights groups were quick to criticize its treatment by the show, charging that they "used this animal until it literally dropped." A group called People for the Ethical Treatment of Animals protested a Bentley Bros. performance in Wilmington, Delaware, by carrying banners which read "Animals suffer under the big top" and "Circus equals animal cruelty." Even though incidents such as these continued to occur, apparently little or no new legislation restricting the use of animals by circuses was passed during the year.

In spite of the bad news, the 1985 season had many high points. Ringling had its hottest four-legged box office attraction since Gargantua, two of Carson and Barnes' flyers turned the quadruple somersault, the great European clown Dimitri made his American circus debut, Tiny Tim and Robin the boy wonder headlined Allan Hill's two units, the President went to the circus, and the Great Circus Parade returned to Milwaukee. Most shows played full seasons, and a larger number of new enterprises entered the field. One presumes, in fact, that the circus will continue in some form as long as children desire to be entertained.

The Clyde Beatty-Cole Bros. Circus, owned by John Pugh and Doug Holwadel, had a good year. Starting the season in late March with a blow down in Sunrise, Florida, the show played its traditional eastern route up the Atlantic Coast, spending the

Concession trailer on Carson and Barnes. Fred. D. Pfening, Jr., photo.



The Clyde Beatty-Cole Bros. Circus published this attractive 24-page program. Pfening Archives.

late spring and summer in the mid-Atlantic states and New England. The show turned south in August, and was in Tennessee and North Carolina in early September. Louisiana in October, and closed at Deerfield Beach, Florida, late that month. The troupe made 2 four-day stands, and 23 one-dayers with the remainder being either two- or three-day dates. This cut the season's mileage and lowered the nut.

The show received a nice write-up in *U.S. News and World Report* in the spring. Some impromptu civil engineering made a muddy, man-eating lot in Winchester, Virginia, on May 3 into a show grounds as heavy construction equipment was leased to grade the swamp into something that looked like a circus lot. They day and dated the Toby Tyler Circus at Scranton, Pennsylvania, on June 12, and hosted the Circus Historical Society Convention at Pittsfield, Massachusetts, later that month. The circus had a scare in New London, Connecticut, in July when the body of a 47-year-old woman was found in the elephant tent. The show was quickly cleared of all charges.

New acts included Gerard Soules and his

poodles, Steve Schumaker's chimps, the Flores family of aerialists, and the Tanguers Troupe of Arab tumblers. Fred Logan again headed up the elephant department. He was boss of nine bulls, including one purchased from Carson and Barnes. Later in the season, the show bought one of Paul Kelly's elephants. Named Suki, she was delivered to the show en route, but was soon shipped to the De Land, Florida, winterquarters. Dave Hoover had the cat act for the twentieth consecutive season. He left the show at season's end and will be replaced by Josip Marcan in 1986. Clark Weigle directed a band of around seven pieces backed up by a tape system.

Beatty-Cole avoided the serious help shortage which most circuses experienced in the East by having a superb cookhouse as workmen stayed on the show for the good food. Wilmington, Delaware, was played twice during the tour. The Yonkers, New York, fair was an oddball date which the entire performance was given under canvas as a free show. Usually fairground circuses gave abbreviated performances. A series of dates on Long Island, many of them without sponsors, were exceptionally good, but rough weather in the South hurt the box office at the end of the year.

The reports on the Circus Vargas' business were mixed. While some observers indicated the show had a good year, others were not as sanguine, as some rumors surfaced toward season's end that the show was in bankruptcy. As with such things, the truth was probably somewhere in between. In recent years the show had played the Midwest with a number of dates in the Chicago area, but in 1985 Vargas returned to its western roots, spending virtually the entire season west of the Rockies. It opened in late January in El Centro, California, soon moving into the San Diego area for a series of dates. March through June was spent in the Los Angeles and San Francisco areas, playing shopping malls and using heavy television and radio advertising. The show moved into Oregon in early July, and later that month went into Washing-

Front yard and big top of the Clyde Beatty-Cole Bros. Circus. George Bingaman photo.





ton state, where it remained until late August. Next came almost a month in Colorado, followed by Las Vegas and Reno engagements, after which the show moved back into California, closing at Bakersfield on November 3.

Owner Cliff Vargas had a heart attack on July 23, and as a consequence was out of commission for quite a while. The nut was cut by playing more three- and four-day stands than in the past. The show set up at the Rose Bowl parking lot in Pasadena when it played the CFA convention in late March and early April. The troupe mined the Denver area for 18 days at five locations in late August and September, the most circusng that town had seen since Sells-Floto moved their winterquarters out of town in the 1920s. Opening night in San Francisco was a benefit to fight AIDS.

The midway was about the same as in past years, with a pony sweep, elephant ride, moon bounce, clown face make-up booth bear photo booth, and concessions. The 2½-hour performance had a number of new turns including three flying acts. Observers noted that Wally Naughtin's three rings of bears were popular with audiences and that the show's aerial ballet, which opened with a French can-can number, had a Vegas flavor. The show had a fancy new lighting system and used a live band during the early part of the year. Later, the tape sound track was re-instituted. Vargas carried nine elephants, two of which were from Africa. Physically the show was similar to previous years with the exception of the triple stake driver, which was replaced by a hydraulic unit attached to one of the Bobcats.

Carson and Barnes, the biggest thing that moved every night, had a successful year, albeit a difficult one as owner D.R. Miller was sidelined with phlebitis on April 22 and remained in the winterquarters at Hugo, Oklahoma, for the remainder of the year. His management team, headed by son-in-law Geary Byrd and daughter Barbara, capably carried on in his stead. The tour began on March 14 at Paris, Texas, and the show stayed in that state almost until the end of April with the exception of five days in New Mexico. Dates in Oklahoma and Missouri followed as the show headed into the industrial heartland of the

Semi-trailer on Circus Vargas. Harry Chalfant photo.

Midwest for most of the summer and early fall. After mid-October dates in Kansas and Oklahoma, relatively northern climes for that time of year, the tent came down for the last time in Hugo on October 21. The circus travelled a little more than 14,000 miles during the year, down about 1500 from 1984, when they toured California.

The performance was probably Dory Miller's finest in his 49 years as a show owner. The flying trapeze department was remarkably strong, arguably the best congregation of aerial talent ever assembled under one big top. Heading up the flying corps was Reuben Caballero, Jr., who on May 20 in Washington, Missouri, became the first person to complete a quadruple somersault under a tent. Later in the year Ricardo Morales also caught the quad, and near season's end Mariciela Vargas became one of the few women to complete a triple somersault. The Flying Caballeros participated in the Monte Carlo Circus Festival in December.

Another feature of the show was Pat White, who garnered reams of publicity throughout the season. She worked the

Combination ticket and concession trailer on Kelly-Miller. Fred D. Pfening, Jr., photo.



cats, liberty horses, and elephants, and was called the female Gunther Gebel-Williams by some scribes. When Carson and Barnes played her home town of Claire, Michigan, the Mayor declared it Pat White day.

A highlight of the year was a three-day stand in Milwaukee during the Great Circus Parade. The sponsor, the Circus World Museum, dropped the admission price to \$3.00 with no reserve seating for the engagement. The show was set-up adjacent to the parade staging area, and the museum's parade wagons and railroad equipment were spotted near the big top. The effect was electrifying as the scene recreated the great railroad aggregations of the 1920s and 1930s. The huge Scola Teloni tent, which had trouped less than a month at the time, was packed for most of the nine performances, including four straw houses the day before the march.

Physically the show was a bit smaller than in previous years, with 36 show-owned vehicles carrying the equipment. As usual, the menagerie was first rate with 24 elephants, a giraffe, a rhino, a hippo, 2 zebras, 3 camels, 3 llamas, over 40 horses and ponies, 5 lions, 4 tigers, and a liger names Topaz. The elephant department was short-handed for part of the season as elephant boss Okie Carr was off the show for three months after having a cancerous tumor removed from his eyelid. Jim Judkins edited a fine route book and scored a first by publishing the text in both English and Spanish.

The Kelly-Miller Circus, managed by David Rawls and partly owned by D.R. Miller, opened in Hugo, Oklahoma, in late March, and toured the South until May, when it went into Ohio, West Virginia, and western Pennsylvania, playing those states through early July. Nearly all of July was spent in Michigan and all of August in Ontario. The show returned to the Midwest in September and moved into Missouri and Arkansas in October, closing in Wilburton, Arkansas, on October 20.


A three-ring, small town circus, the outfit presented 18 displays. A neat promotional device was a tug of war between an elephant and local sports teams. The elephant always won. The midway had an elephant ride, pony sweep, moon bounce, con-

cession trailer, and a combination menagerie-side show tent. Three elephants, a llama, a tiger, five goats, two horses, and liberty ponies comprised the menagerie. A Punch and Judy act, fire eating, a Chinese torture chamber, a snake pit, and a guillotine act made up the kid-show portion. The troupe moved on four semis, and played under a 90-foot by 180-foot Scola Teloni vinyl big top. Ron Bacon promoted many of the Ohio dates.

Dick Garden's Toby Tyler Circus had a more extensive itinerary in 1985 than in its maiden season last year. After opening in late April in Florida, the show headed into the mid-Atlantic states in May and the East in June and July. The circus was in the Midwest in August, going as far west as Wisconsin. It headed back east in September, playing dates in Pennsylvania and New York before going south late in the month. The tour ended at Winter Haven, Florida, in mid-October. The show's sophisticated phone promotion reportedly helped it have a very profitable season, but it also created a number of problems with sponsors and local and state governments. The show played Columbus, Ohio, on August 1 and again on September 1, and Gaithersburg, Maryland, on May 13 and September 20, using the same lot on both occasions at both dates. The second time around, however, the title was Tom Mix California Circus.

The show travelled behind 19 steering wheels and used a Bruno top with 90 foot rounds and two 20s, two 30s, and a 40-foot middle section. The midway had a moon bounce, a snake show, a pony ride, menagerie, and a gorilla pit show. Tyrone the Terrible was the star of the ape attraction, and he lived up to his billing when he bit off three of manager John Frazier's fingers in late July.

Animals carried included 8 elephants, 21 horses, 2 camels, 10 cats, 2 llamas, a hyena, and 2 hippos. The hippos' appearance in the performance was only the second such display in American circus history, the first tandem being Dick and Babe on the



Toby Tyler

Circus

3 RING

UNDER THE GIGANTIC BIG TOP

COMPLETE HORSE SHOW

MORE THAN 100 ANIMALS

Lions, Tiger, Bears, Camels, Elephants, Monkeys, Hippos, Llamas, Zebras, Laughing Hyenas

WORLD'S ONLY PERFORMING OSTRICHES AND HIPPOS

HILLIARD
FRANKLIN COUNTY FAIRGROUNDS
THURSDAY, AUGUST 1

SHOWTIMES: 3:00 p.m. 5:30 p.m. 8:00 p.m.

HOSTED BY COLUMBUS JAYCEES

CHILDREN (UNDER 14) \$3.50 ADULTS \$5.50

FREE FRANK BUCK BRING 'EM BACK ALIVE
WILD ANIMAL MENAGERIE

AMERICA'S GREATEST ENTERTAINMENT VALUE
GROUNDS OPEN 1 HOUR BEFORE SHOWTIME

Toby Tyler played Hilliard, Ohio, a suburb of Columbus, twice in 1985. The first time through it was called Toby Tyler; the second, Tom Mix. Pfening Archives.

Sells Bros. Circus in the 1880s and 1890s. The rest of the exhibition, which often lasted only an hour, was not noteworthy, but the nine-piece band under the direction of Charles Schlarbaum for most of the year was fine and played traditional circus tunes.

John "Gopher" Davenport's Ford Bros. Circus did not publish its route in the trade publications, nor did it receive many write-ups. Consequently data on the show was scant. It opened early in the year in Texas. After playing its customary dates in the South and Midwest, the show went east into new territory where it exhibited in New York and New England in July. Ford spent most of August in maritime Canada, had some September dates in New York, and

Ford Bros. used this air calliope in up-town bally and for pre-show concerts. L.A. Sadler photo.



Tom Mix

California

Circus

3 RING

UNDER THE GIGANTIC BIG TOP

OVER 100 ANIMALS

Lions, Tigers, Bears, Elephants, Camels, Llamas, Monkeys, Zebras, Laughing Hyenas

WORLD'S ONLY PERFORMING OSTRICHES AND HIPPOS

COMPLETE HORSE SHOW

FREE FRANK BUCK BRING 'EM BACK ALIVE
WILD ANIMAL MENAGERIE

BE A KID AGAIN — COME TO THE CIRCUS
Hilliard — Franklin County Fairgrounds
Sunday, Sept. 1

SHOWTIMES 1:00 p.m. and 3:30 p.m.
Hosted by East Columbus Sertoma Club
Children (under 14) \$3.50 Adults \$5.50

SEE DARING DOUBLE LEAP OF DEATH

AMERICA'S GREATEST ENTERTAINMENT VALUE
GROUNDS OPEN 1 HOUR BEFORE SHOWTIME

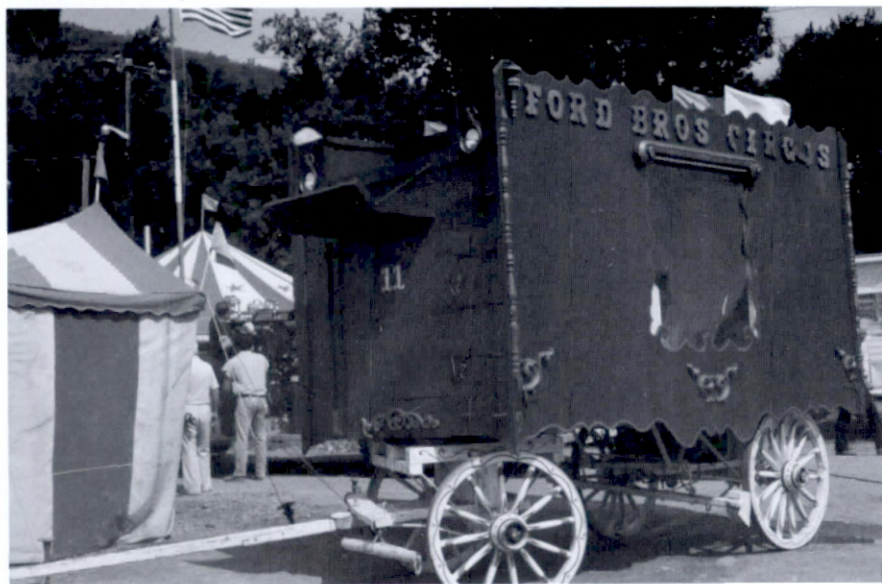
October ones in Kansas. In mid-December it was loaded on a boat and taken to Hawaii, where it was the first tent to play the islands in 15 years. The miles traveled during 1985 were phenomenal, and the show surely set a record for miles covered within the United States and Canada in a season. Further, it was presumably the first circus to ever play Maine and Hawaii on the same tour.

Ford Bros. presented a performance similar to Carson and Barnes and was heavy on animals. One observer counted 118 of them on the payroll in July. While the four-footed personnel changed over the course of the year, in the spring the show carried about 10 cats; a dozen elephants, 6 of whom were punk Africans; 2 giraffes; 2 ostriches; a zebra; and a hippo. One of the giraffes died in LeRoy, New York, on July 11; the other one apparently had left the show before then, leaving it giraffeless for part of the year. An unconfirmed report had a rhino in the menagerie later in the season.

A new feature was a combination air calliope-ticket wagon pulled by two Belgian horses which made an up-town bally on show morning and gave a pre-show concert on the lot. Elephant races were also staged as part of the pre-show publicity.

Ford Bros. used a new Canobbio tent which was a 120-foot round top with three 40s, and enclosed five rings. The performance, which was backed by a five-piece band, included 17-year-old Angela Null and her lions, tigers, and a leopard, a flying act, and many animal acts. The midway was composed of a pony ride, a snake show, moon bounce, elephant ride, ape show, rat show, and a concession stand. Sixteen tractors and trucks hauled the equipment.

When Ford went into Canada some of the equipment remained behind. It was rechristened Ryder Bros., after the company which leased the four semis and whose name was on their sides, and toured Maine and New Hampshire in August, and played some Ohio dates in September. This one used a Bruno tent and carried three elephants and a number of other animals. Joe King managed the outfit, and Bobby and Rosa Gibbs presented many of the dis-





Midway on Roberts Bros. Circus at Wilton, Connecticut, August 21, 1985. Bob Connor photo, David Orr collection.

plays during the one hour, 15 minute performance.

Information on Charles "Termite" Davenport's Daily Bros. Circus was virtually non-existent. It opened at Huntsville, Texas, on March 5, and played in the South through August, when it reportedly closed because of its inability to get liability insurance coverage. It was called Can-Am Circus during part of the season.

Franzen Bros. Circus stated its twelfth season in Florida in mid-March. The show travelled up the Atlantic seaboard, reaching Maryland by May. Soon after, it exhibited in western New York and Pennsylvania for the first time, after which it moved into more familiar territory in the Midwest. After the usual fall southern swing, the troupe closed in Florida in early December.

Owner Wayne Franzen put on much of the performance as he presented the cat act, a camel and llama act, a 12-pony drill, and Okha the elephant. Two baby African bulls resided in the menagerie, but did not perform. The show helped Delavan, Wisconsin, celebrate the 100th anniversary of the Holland-McMahon Circus on July 23. This one ringer gave good value to its small-town audiences.

Roberts Bros. opened in Florida in April, and spent most of the summer in Pennsylvania, New York, and New England, including a number of dates in Maine. In October it made a swing through Florida under the Larsson Bros. title, the name coming from Carl Larsson, who booked the dates. Five show-owned rigs pulled the equipment, which included a new big top from Leaf. The Robert Earl family owned the circus and did much of the work. Bob and Doris Earl ran the outfit; Bob Jr. performed; son Jeff ran the concessions, and Bob Jr.'s son clowned. An organ and drums backed up the acts. The midway had an elephant-skinned dog, pony ride, moon bounce, elephant ride, and concessions. At Bennington, Vermont, on July 10 the show was sponsored by the Bennington College Early Childhood Center which did a good job on the advance without phones, and the circus did two straw houses. The date exemplified the new types of sponsors which used circuses for fund raising and the success they had without phone rooms.

The Ronald McDonald Circus was one of

the more interesting operas on the road in 1985. Managed by ex-Ringling staffer Frank Curry, the performance was themed around the McDonald's hamburger characters, and the advertising featured Ronald McDonald. Curry had a similar show in Canada last year. The relationship between the circus and the fast-food giant was unknown. It played the St. Louis area in late May and early June, then laid off two weeks at the Taylorville, Illinois, fairgrounds where it re-opened, showing through southern Illinois until July 1 when it went the way of all flesh. Lack of business was reported as the reason for the premature folding.

This one was carried on seven show-owned trailers pulled by four Ryder rental trucks. The show moved very slowly as the semis had to double back at each stand to make a second haul to the next town. Problems were also experienced in getting up the three-ring Italian big top. The show had a good performance which included three production numbers using floats, inflatable characters, and theatrical lighting. Among the acts were five elephants owned by John Cueno and worked by Roy Wells, the Dancing Gauchos, a fast paced Zouave type act, Rex Horton's novel bear aerial balloon act, a trained bison, and a living statue act. Four musicians accompanied the performance.

The Big Apple Circus was the class act

Big Apple program for the New York City winter date. Pfening Archives.



Entrance to Big Apple Circus near Cleveland in August. The equipment was purchased from the Circus Tivoli. Fred D. Pfening, Jr., photo.

of the American arenic world. Opening its summer season in April in Brooklyn under its European big top, the one-ringer played dates in New York, Connecticut, and New Jersey through June 7, when it went into hiatus for almost two months. It reopened in Maine in late July, and after exhibitions in New Hampshire and Massachusetts moved the farthest west in its history to perform near Cleveland. It closed the touring season at Buffalo on September 2.

The program looked like a list of inductees into the Circus Hall of Fame, circa 2035, and included Katja Schumann, Dolly Jacobs, Roby Gasser and his sea lions, the Flying Gaonas, the Carrillo brothers, and Ben Williams and Anna May the elephant. A PBS television special in which the Boston Pops provided the musical accompaniment to the performance was a highlight. The Pops choice of music made for some interesting circus. In one number, for instance, Ben Williams and Anna May performed their high energy act to the theme from *Raiders of the Lost Ark*. It was the first time a circus performance had been backed by a full symphony orchestra.

The under-canvas winter stand at Lincoln Center in New York City was as successful as ever, and ran from November 20 to January 5, a bit longer than in the past. Katja Schumann resurrected Andrew Ducrow's classic turn *The Courier of St. Petersburg* for the date, and the special feature was the great European clown Dimitri making his American debut. His son David had been a Big Apple regular since 1982. The clown corps of Michael Christensen, Barry Lubin, and Jeff Gordon were the cleverest and most inventive funsters working on sawdust. Their witty and topical repartee proved that the talking clown didn't die with Dan Rice.

Allan Hill's Great American Circus started in Florida in March and by May was in the mid-Atlantic and New England region, where it remained until August. A swing through the Midwest followed, after which the show headed back south to close the season. All reports indicated the tour was profitable.

The midway had an elephant ride, pony sweep, moon bounce, snake show, and two kiddie rides. A new Leaf big top was raised at Roanoke Rapids, North Carolina, on April 28. It was an 80-foot round top with

two 30-foot and one 40-foot center pieces. Billy Martin on the rola boa, Ed Steeples and his bears, Tim Loyal's somersault riding, and Joe Frisco and four elephants were among the acts. A four-piece band provided music.

Tiny Tim was the star of the show and made the entire tour. Tim was great publicity as he usually spent part of each morning being interviewed by local television and radio. Even though his act was nothing more than singing the songs that made him famous for 20 minutes 20 years ago, his turn rarely failed to go over big with audiences. He suffered minor injuries in a wreck in New York in August when the driver of the truck in which he was riding fell asleep at the wheel and crossed the center line.

Hill's second show, Circus USA, played Georgia and Alabama in May and was in Pennsylvania by late June. Ward Hall and Chris Christ managed the troupe, Hall leaving during the tour. In August it had a string of engagements in Virginia, and closed in October. This one-ringer moved on eight rigs and used a new Leaf canvas which was 90-foot round with a 50-foot center. The midway had an elephant ride, moon bounce, pony sweep, snake show, and a side show. The latter presented a fire eater, tattooed lady, and a sword swallower.

The performance featured James Zoppe, a fine rider, and Heidi Herriott doing a dressage act and web number. Mike Rice had the elephant, a male tusker named Rajah. Burt Ward, aka Robin from the 1960s cult television program *Batman*, joined Circus USA in August and remained for the season. Art and life became ridiculously intermingled with Ward's appearance in a circus ring as aficionadas recalled that the comic book Robin has been a member of the imaginary Flying Graysons trapeze act before becoming Batman's partner. Hill's use of the slightly famous of two decades ago marked an interesting new wrinkle in the circus business, and reflected his understanding of what appealed to backwoods baby boomers.

Roller Bros. Circus played a high grass route. After opening its third season in Arkadelphia, Arkansas, on April 27, the show headed north through Missouri and Iowa, reaching the Minnesota iron fields on June 1. July and August were spent in the

Allan Hill's Circus USA on the lot. George Bingaman photo.



Midway of the Ronald McDonald Circus during its short-lived season. Tom Parkinson photo.

big sky and plains states with the westernmost stop being near Sun Valley, Idaho. The show then headed south into Texas, New Mexico, and Oklahoma, after which it moved east into the deep South where it played out the year, closing at Ferriday, Louisiana, on November 4. This route made for some tough trouping as the Continental Divide was crossed three times, and the average daily jump was over 100 miles. The last month of the season was spent fighting the rain and mud that came with the hurricanes which hit the Gulf Coast in October.

The circus was carried on 10 show-owned vehicles and approximately 20 privately owned units. It used a vinyl Bruno push pole tent which was an 80-foot round top with a 30-foot and two 20-foot middle sections, and sat 1200 people, 1450 if strawed. Owner Jim Roller was tent boss and doubled as the electrician and seat boss. The midway included a menagerie, snake show, moon bounce, and concessions. Late in the season the remnants of the Exotic Animal Circus joined as an independent attraction.

Roller Bros. offered a nice performance for a show its size, using three rings of displays backed by a live band. Acts included Helena Carpenter and her cats and Queenie the elephant. The bull, a bright 7-year-old African trained by Jodie Craigmille at the Bucky Steele compound in Seagoville, Texas, was also the ride elephant, yanked

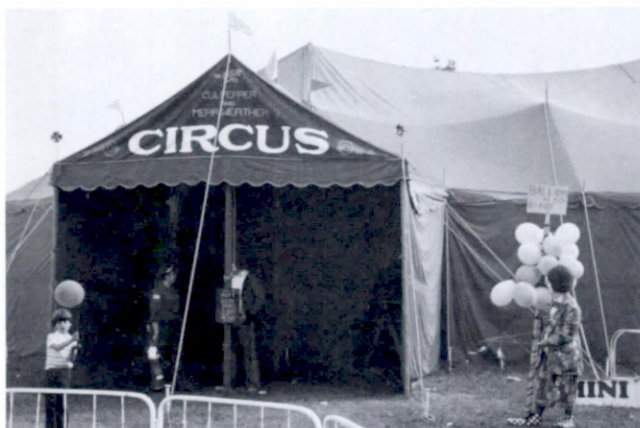
up quarter poles, and willingly pulled trucks out of the mud when necessary. David Balding's elephant Flora started the year, but left in late June, and Bones Craig and his two Asian bulls, Judy and Sahib, were on the show part of the season.

Among the smaller tented troupes the Friendly Bros. Circus, owned by John Schoonbeck of Gariner, New York, played indoors at resorts in New York in March, and made a spring and summer tour in the East, mostly in New York, under an 80-foot by 50-foot top which sat about 500. Toby Ballantine, Lottie Brunn, and the Back Street Flyers, an ex-Big Apple Circus act, were among the performers. This show used taped music for the one-ring exhibition. The Vidbel Old Time American Circus, owned by Alfred and Joyce Vidbel, opened at Delmar, New York, on May 23, and played an eight-week route exclusively in that state using an 80-foot by 40-foot bale ring top. The one-ring performance was accompanied by an organ and drums. Oscarian Bros. Circus, a tent owned by the Manuel Ramos family, had some dates in Florida in February and again in October. Presumably, they appeared somewhere in the interim, but no information was available.

In good times and bad, circuses come and go. Two shows from last year, Lewis Bros., and Jules and Beck, didn't open in 1985. Their departure was offset by the appearance of four tent circuses which debuted this season. The Culpepper and

Excellent elevated view of the entire Roller Bros. layout. Jim Roller photo.





Front door of the Culpepper and Merriweather Circus while it was a free show on a carnival in Middletown, Rhode Island in May. Don James photo.

Merriweather Great Combined Circus, framed in Bushnell, Florida, was one of these. It opened in the sunshine state in March, and moved up the East Coast where it appeared as a midway attraction with the Rockwell Amusement Carnival in Rhode Island in May. After making other dates in New England and Pennsylvania in May and June, it quickly moved into the Midwest in early July. September found the show in Nebraska, Colorado, and Arizona. It closed its transcontinental tour in California in mid-October. The six performers put on a creditable one-ring exhibition in a tent seating about 400. Features were a single pony drill, trained dogs, magic and sideshow acts, and, later in the season, an African elephant named Akali, owned by Ralph and Dotty Olson. Robert "Red" Johnson was part-owner and manager. He also did much of the performing. Veteran showman John Strong and circus fan Dr. Henry Maxfield also apparently had some equity in this opera. Maxfield bought out the show as a gift to his home town of Mason City, Illinois, in late July; it will be recalled that he turned the same trick with Franzen last year. Long time CHS member Joe Fleming and his wife Thelma also bought out the show in early September for their home town of Trenton,

Allen Bros. Circus semi and trailer at Carbondale, Kansas. Jim McRoberts photo.



CHS member Joe Fleming, on left, was the sponsor when Culpepper and Merriweather played his home town of Trenton, Nebraska, on September 3. John Strong is in center of photo and Thelma Fleming on right. Joe Fleming photo.

Nebraska. Culpepper and Merriweather went into quarters in Buckeye, Arizona, ready to try the water again in 1986.

Another new addition to the ranks was the Allen Bros. Circus, owned by Allen Bedford, a former carnival owner out of Wauchula, Florida. After a spot date in Florida in late February, the show began its regular season in Florida in late March, moving into Georgia, the Carolinas, and Tennessee in April. After playing the plains states in late spring and early summer, Allen Bros. went into British Columbia and then Alaska for 25 days each. No information was available after their return to the states. This circus used a 140-foot by 70-foot Bruno top, and moved on four show-owned trucks. A typical dog-and-pony outfit, it carried one elephant, had a petting zoo, and used taped music in the big top.

Another entrant into the field died at birth. The Exotic Animal Circus, owned by Gary Loraditch, a carnival operator, opened near San Antonio about April 19 and made a few dates before closing. It used a one-ring Bruno tent which was 115-foot by 75-foot, and its midway had an oddity museum, moon bounce, kid ferris wheel, and concessions. The show had an African elephant named Kenya and Jim Silverlake was superintendant. Some of the equipment later hooked up with Roller Bros. Circus.

The last of the new tent shows to appear in 1985 was the Circus Bruno, owned by Bruno Loyal, the tent magnate. The one-ring show opened in downtown Dallas under a big top on November 7 and then moved to Galveston for a Shrine date. The

performance was a strong one, according to reports, with Loyal himself working the cat act. Appearances in Puerto Rico and the South Pacific were put on hold at year's end, but plans are to tour it in 1986.

This was the year of the unicorn on Ringling Bros. and Barnum & Bailey. The feature attraction of the red unit, the animal received national attention on April 5, two days after the show opened in New York's Madison Square Garden, when the president of the American Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals charged that the unicorn was actually a goat with a surgically implanted bull's horn. He said such an operation was "cruel and severely unethical" and called for the public to boycott the show. Allen Bloom, senior vice-president for Ringling, responded that the charges were ludicrous, and that the unicorns (the circus carried four of them) arrived on the show in exactly the same condition as they appeared in the Garden except their horns were shorter. Ringling also issued a "fact sheet" which stated that they "magically appeared" at the circus in Houston in 1984 looking for a home.

On April 8 the U.S. Department of Agriculture said it would inspect the animals after receiving legal opinion that the ani-

Allen Bros. Circus tent at Carbondale, Kansas. Jim McRoberts photo.





Marquee for Circus Bruno at Dallas opening. John Polacsek photo.

mals were protected by federal law. An inspection was made on April 10, at which time the Agriculture Department investigators concluded that the animals were "basically goats," but further stated that they had no objection to the show calling them unicorns. "Genetically they're goats," said Dr. Gerald Toms, the USDA's chief veterinarian in Albany who inspected them, "but if you want to surrender to whimsy, then they're unicorns." He went on to say that they probably suffered no pain when they underwent—as kids—a medical procedure which moved their horn buds to the middle of their heads, and noted that the fused buds had become natural, growing horns. Importantly, he said further that the unicorns were well treated, which ended any potential legal problem with their exhibition.

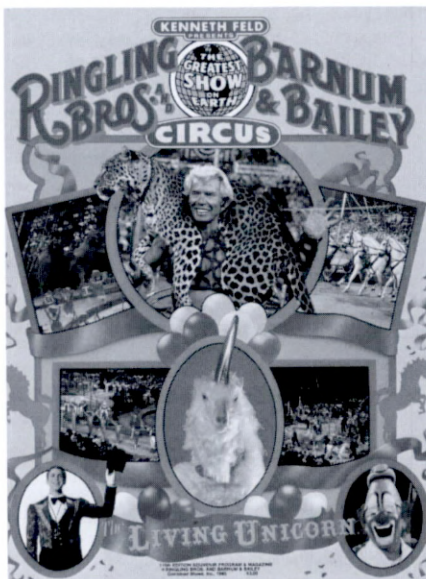
The story stayed alive about a week. The *New York Post* tracked down the unicorn's creators, one Otter G'Zelle and his wife Morning Glory in California. They had patented the process of moving the horn buds and had nine more of the animals on a farm north of San Francisco. The New York Consumer Affairs Department, which apparently had nothing better to do, tried to get the show to modify its advertising, and the New York State Consumer Protection Board called upon the circus to stop the promotion. The circus responded by printing badges which said "I believe in the living unicorn," and by running a sensational full page ad in the *New York Times* with the headline "Don't Let the Grinches Steal the Fantasy." The ad went on to state that the animals received excellent care and that any "suggestion that Ringling Bros. and Barnum & Bailey Circus would be responsible for cruelty to any animals is absolutely ludicrous." The circus's handling of the controversy was a public relations masterpiece, and all reports indicated that the incident was a boon to business. The key to the successful handling of the situation was the fact that the unicorns, and all other animals on the show, were cared for in a humane and lawful manner. Had this not been the case, the show would have had a publicity nightmare.

The Ringling red unit opened the season at the Venice, Florida, winterquarters on

December 27, 1984. The route included two months in Madison Square Garden and a month in Chicago at two locations. It closed at Nassau, Long Island, on December 1. Ben Vereen was the host of the annual television show from St. Petersburg, and Gunther Gebel-Williams also made it to the tube in a segment of the show *Lifestyles of the Rich and Famous*. The 42 car train was made up of 9 flats, 1 double decker car, 2 tunnel cars, 2 elephant cars, 2 horse cars, 1 storage car, 2 concessions cars, and 23 coaches. On the way into Oklahoma City in June, the train collided with a pickup truck, killing the driver. Sources reported that the show had a good year at the box office. One executive was quoted as saying that California attendance was the best since 1964.

The unicorn was the star of the two specs. New acts in the 2½-hour production were Reinand's chimps; Sabu, single trapeze; two Eastern European teeterboard acts; and the Passo brothers, high wire. Gunther Gebel-Williams again showed his remarkable versatility by presenting liberty horses, tigers, and elephants. The venerable Lou Jacobs was still clowning at age

Gunther Gebel-Williams and the unicorn were the features of the Ringling red unit's 1985 program. Pfening archives.



Circus Bruno ticket wagon at Dallas opening. John Polacsek photo.

82 early in the tour, but retired during the season. He had been with Ringling since 1923.

The Ringling blue unit opened its season in Venice on January 24. After appearing as far west as Texas and as far north as Minnesota, the show finished the year in Cleveland in mid-November. The circus scored a publicity coup when President Reagan visited in Washington. At St. Louis and Kansas City, Ward Hall's side-show and a menagerie were added as Hall's tent was set up inside the arenas. Milwaukee was played for the first time in years. Three cars from the train were derailed in Fort Worth on the way into Dallas; no injuries occurred. Assistant performance director Peggy Williams gave a series of lectures at Fordham University on using the circus as a teaching aid. The course ran six days and included a field trip to the show.

Ringling performances change every other year, and this was the second season for the 100th anniversary celebration of the brothers Ringling's first circus. The performance was virtually identical to 1984, and featured the Flying Vasequez, flying return; Wade Burck and his white tigers; Michu; and Axel Gautier and the elephants. Burck received a front-page write up in the *Wall Street Journal*, and Miguel Vasequez threw his 100th successful quadruple somersault in Dallas.

Ringling-Barnum continued to squabble with the Venice, Florida, city government as the town refused to waive a \$20,000 fee for police and fire protection, and the show refused to pay a rent increase on land it leased from the city. The issues were unsettled at year's end when circus owner Kenneth Feld paid the help in two-dollar bills to impress upon the city the show's economic impact. In other corporate news, Earl Duryea, director of routing and tours, left the show early in the year to head the Harlem Globetrotters. In February the circus bought back the stuffed hide of Gargantua II at the auction of Circus World properties. Kenneth Feld was a guest columnist in *USA Today*, where he touted the "Safe Kids" program which the circus sponsored. At year's end a third unit of the circus was announced for 1986 to play fairs



When Ringling owner Kenneth Feld visited the Great Circus Parade in Milwaukee in July, he posed in front of the old Ringling Bell wagon which he owns. Fred Dahlinger photo.

and similar attractions. The new unit, along with such ideas as the sideshow and menagerie, were indicative of Kenneth Feld's innovative thinking in his first full year at the helm of the Greatest Show on Earth.

The Shrine circus continued to thrive in 1985. A major segment of the industry, too often overlooked by fans and historians, the genre has played a significant role in the American circus for the last 50 years, providing employment for countless acts during the winter months and raising millions of dollars annually for Shrine charities. This season saw the usual reshuffling of dates as local temples shopped around for the best deal, sometimes hammering on circus producers to lower their fees. To make a profit under such circumstances, producers occasionally hired less desirable acts, which led to complaints. The opposite problem occurred when the producer and circus chairman developed a cozy relationship over the years and competition was effectively shut out, creating no incentive for the producer to put together as good a show as he might otherwise. Doubtless the vast majority of Shrine temples and circus producers operate in a business-like manner, and the foregoing is simply to point out some of the problems producers experienced.

Tommy Hanneford's Royal Hanneford Circus was one of the leading Shrine shows. It opened in Flint, Michigan, on January 12 with a fine performance featuring Mark Karoly doing the old Poodles Hanneford comedy riding act, Alan Gold and six tigers and five lions, Senor Rai and his magic act, Christopher Munoz and his cannon act, and a first-rate spec. Hanneford had two shows out for much of the late winter and spring. The red unit played large cities such as Minneapolis, Detroit, Houston, Cincinnati, and Tampa for anywhere from a few days to over two weeks. A second troupe, called the green unit, made shorter stands in small towns, many of them in Michigan and the South. Extra acts were brought in for the huge Detroit date, and at Lansing, Michigan, the Elliot Amusement Company had carnival rides on a lower level of the arena, a concept similar to the English Fun Fairs,

but a rarity in this country. A wonderful piece of business was a comedy riding act called the Sanger Riding Academy, in which Tommy Hanneford performed a variation of the ancient Billy Buttons turn in which he acted like a rube from the crowd.

After the spring Shrine schedule ended in May, the Hanneford Circus appeared under canvas as a one-ring attraction at fairs, many of them along the Hudson River. In October, the second Shrine season began with dates in Knoxville, Richmond, Louisville, Baltimore, and New Orleans, among other cities. The year ended at Mobile, Alabama in early December. On a sad note, Catherine Hanneford, the oldest active performer in the world, died after suffering a stroke only hours after performing for the last time. Nana, as she was called, was 97.

Tarzan Zerbini was another big-time Shrine showman. He operated two units, called the blue and the gold. The gold unit opened in Fort Wayne on February 1, and then played Shrine circuses in Memphis, Albuquerque, Spokane, Seattle, Portland, and Indianapolis, among other cities. This unit spent May and June doing one-nighters in western Canada. The show appeared under the old Circus Tivoli tent in many Ontario towns in July and August, while the blue unit did indoor and ball park dates in the south. In late August and early September, it made a tented date at Winnipeg while the second unit was in Colorado Springs. The last engagement was in Chattanooga in early October. Zerbini changed his performance as the season progressed and actors went on other shows, but at various times during the year he employed the Hawthorn elephants, the Munoz cannon act, and the Douglas McValley wheel of death.

The Circus Coronas also had two shows out for part of 1985. The first played mainly small- and medium-size towns for the Shrine, although it had major dates in St. Louis and Kansas City. At St. Louis, the augmented performance appeared in nine

rings at Busch Stadium. Other dates were in Georgia, New Jersey, Mississippi, Iowa, Alabama, and Florida. The second unit was the midway attraction on the United Shows Carnival from July until November.

The Carden International Circus, owned by George and Larry Carden, was yet another organization which had two units on the road. Throughout the year it was under the auspices of the Shrine and other sponsors in a number of states including Texas, Louisiana, Colorado, Idaho, and Minnesota, with major Shrine dates at Milwaukee and South Bend. During the summer the circus was under a tent at fairs, the Missouri State Fair among them. The Carden show played both indoor and outdoor arenas. The Shrine unit traveled behind three semis, one of which carried the troupe's three elephants.

The Circus Gatti or American Continental Circus, operated by Patricia Gatti Colquhoun, played in the western United States and Western Canada, doing a number of both Shrine and police dates. Its season opened in Texas in early February and closed in that state in late October. Like Carden it appeared outdoors many times during the season. Gatti produced the Shrine circuses in Los Angeles, Reno, and Las Vegas, and did police dates in Spokane, Portland, San Francisco, Seattle, and Dallas. The performance featured Harry Thomas and nine tigers, and Tom and Pom Pom Donoho with four elephants. When the circus appeared in Canada it used the title Canadian International.

Hamid Morton opened in Roanoke, Virginia, on February 1 and had a run of Shrine dates, mainly in the East, through mid-June. It also had some Christmas circuses in its home state of New Jersey in December. Major stands included Hartford, Oklahoma City, Pittsburgh, and St. Paul. Rix's bears, Ben DeWayne's elephants, and Carol Marcan's cats all appeared under the Hamid Morton banner at one time or another during the year. The show had a special one-day promotion in Atlanta on May 8 for Coke which used the slogan "Step Right Up to the Greatest Taste on Earth" and many circus acts including cannonballist Hugo Zacchini and the John Herriot family helped to introduce the ill-fated new Coke. The show sandwiched this trick in between the May 5 closing in Elmira, New York, and a May 10 date in Salisbury Maryland.

George Hubler's International Circus had a number of indoor sponsored dates in Ohio in February, including Mentor, where the powerhouse performance included Dolly Jacobs, Ben Williams with Anna May the elephant, the Zoppe riders, the Carrillo Bros., and Josip Marcan and his cats. He also had the Grotto Circus in Springfield, Ohio, in April; dates in Ohio, Indiana, and Michigan in the summer; and a series of one-day stands in New York in October. Eddie Zacchini's Olympic International Circus had a three-ringer under canvas at the Florida State Fair in Tampa in February. In early March he had the Shrine Circus in Chicago, which featured Bruno Blaszak with nine tigers, Dondi the ele-

phant, and Gaylord Maynard with his horse Chief Bear Paw. Other dates included Nashville, Terre Haute, Cleveland, and the Alabama State Fair at Montgomery. Alberto and Sandra Zoppe had their Circus Europa at Rochester, New York, in February with the Diano elephants and David Smith's cannon act. They also performed at Buffalo, Little Rock, and Monroe, Louisiana, for the Shriners and appeared at the Rodeo of the Ozarks at Springdale, Arkansas, in early July as the grandstand attraction.

Bob Atterbury again produced the Texas Shrine circuit. It began in Austin on October 9, moved to San Antonio, then Fort Worth, and closed at Dallas on November 30. John Cox worked the Cueno tiger act during the run. Austin was back in the fold after two years in the spring with Tommy Hanneford. Wayne McCary produced Shrine shows in five Maine cities in April and May. He also put together the circus at the Eastern States Exposition in West Springfield, Massachusetts, in September. Boom Boom Browning had the band at this one, and among the acts were Dolly Jacobs and the Carrillo Bros. Bill Kay produced Shrine circuses in New York in March, in Utah and Colorado in June, and in West Virginia in July. He had a few Florida dates in October, including Sarasota.

Gracie McIntosh and her M & M Circus had some Iowa and Nebraska Shrine dates in April. Ada Smeiya and the Woodcock elephants made these stands. She had a tented engagement at Mt. Clemens, Michigan, in June. Ron Kelroy produced Shrine circuses in Ohio, Kentucky, West Virginia, and New York, with Louisville being the biggest town on the route. The show included Otto Berosini and his excellent cat act. Ed Migley's Circus Odyssey had a series of Shrine dates, mostly in the East, and spent a month in Puerto Rico early in the year. Ian Garden's Garden Bros. Circus had a number of Canadian Shrine dates from February to May, including Toronto and Montreal. Josip Marcan and his lion and tigers, the Zoppe riders, and the Tangier Troupe were among the acts. He later worked under various auspices in Ontario in August. Bobby Moore's baby elephants were a feature during that run.


Don Johnson's Clyde Bros. Circus Shrine circused in Iowa, Illinois, and Pennsylvania in May and June. Later in the year he had a series of dates for temples in Texas. Lou Ann Jacobs was with the show at these dates. Like a number of other showmen, Johnson worked for other sponsors, including the Firefighters in San Antonio in March. That one had Hall bears and Johnson's three elephants. Some producers had a only few engagements, in some cases only one. Jacqueline Zerbini, Tarzan's ex-wife, had the Columbus Shrine Circus in April, where Billy Barton made a farewell appearance. Sam Polack produced the Toledo Shrine date for the thirteenth consecutive year with Rix's bears, the Diano elephant, and Otto Berosini's wild animals.

A few circuses specialized in playing

fairs. Either as a tented or a grandstand show, they usually were booked by the fair and exhibited at no charge. Many, if not most, of them made both indoor and outdoor dates sponsored by service clubs as well. The Herriott Trained Animal Circus, for example, opened on March 1 under the canvas at a fair in Key West, Florida. It then made three Shrine dates in that state in April, an indoor date in New Orleans in early May, and ended its spring tour with the Shrine Circus in Wilmington, Delaware, late that month. The circus, owned by veteran showman John Herriott, appeared beneath a Leaf top as a free show at fairs in New York, Virginia, Vermont, North Carolina, and South Carolina from July to October, and made a special 4th of

When the Herriott Family Circus played Rochester, New York, for the Genesee Country Museum, CHS member Dick Flint designed this special handbill for the date. Pfening Archives.

Announcing
the
HERRIOTT
TRAINED ANIMAL
CIRCUS
AMAZING ANIMAL ACTORS



WILL WONDERS NEVER CEASE
IT'S COMING SURE IN ALL ITS ENTIRETY
ACTUALLY WATER-PROOF TENTS
JUST HOLD ON WAIT! PLOUGH PLANT HARROW
HOE AND WHEN THE APPLE BLOSSOMS HAVE
FALLEN, THE CATTLE TURNED OUT, AND THE
GRASS IS WAVING IN THE WEST WIND, AND
CROPS ARE DOING WELL
HITCH UP AND BRING THE FOLKS TO SEE

THE LEADING SHOW OF THE TWO HEMISPHERES

**A RICH, A RARE,
A MORAL ENTERTAINMENT**
Reasons why Everybody Should Go
Good Reasons Why Everybody Should Go

First — Because it is a splendid Show.
Second — Because all the Performances are given in a Single Ring, where everything can be easily seen and heard.
Third — Because we give absolutely as good an Entertainment as any other Show in America.
Fourth — Because everything and every feature is strictly First-Class, and conducted upon purely honorable principles.
Fifth — Because a family can attend for what it usually costs one person.

To Ladies and Children: The Management wishes to impress on Families, Ladies and Children, that they need have no hesitation in coming unattended. The best of order and decorum will be preserved, and nothing indecent or offensive will be seen or spoken. Police and attentive ushers will show you to eligible seats.

Novelty After Novelty. No Old Features. Everything Bright and New.
SURPRISE AFTER SURPRISE.
Watch For It! Wait For It! Don't Fail To Witness It!
Wait! Because it is the only and the only other showmen in the East.

A Grand Aggregate of the whole world's greatest and most wonderful Acts, Dynamically Acrobatic and Athletic Performances.

EVERY ACT A FEATURE!
Every Performance a Thrilling Sensation.

Admission — \$1.00
A Great Show at Popular Low Prices.

Genesee Country Museum
JULY 5, 6, & 7, 1985

Don't Forget the Day and Date!

July weekend stand at the Genesee Country Museum, in Rochester, New York. A second unit, managed by wife Mary Ruth, appeared at Kid's World amusement park in Longbranch, New Jersey, from May until September as an open-air attraction.

This neat little show was a reincarnation of the old Gentry Bros. Dog and Pony Circus at the turn of the century. The Herriott family put on most of the one-ring performance with daughter Weiner doing a number of acts including juggling, rolling globe, and dogs and ponies. A January mule act and a four-pony drill were new for 1985. The hour-long display was back by taped music, and the entire troupe moved behind three steering wheels. Barry Lubin, Grandma the Clown from the Big Apple Circus, made part of the Longbranch date with the second unit. The Eastman Kodak Company underwrote part of the show's cost at the Genesee Country Museum in July; consequently all seats were a buck. Immediate past CHS President Dick Flint designed a nice herald for this engagement using cuts from circus art of the 19th century. The result looked all the world like it was printed in 1875.

Other circuses of this type included the George Hanneford Family Circus, a one-ring affair which exhibited at fairs in Florida, Kentucky, Virginia, and Ontario, often appearing 10 or more days at a spot. Dave Twomey's Happytime Circus displayed at a number of California Fairs, including the Los Angeles County Fair in Pomona. For the 19-day Pomona run, the show used a 100-foot tent with a 40-foot middle, and used a three-piece band for the 45-minute show. Tom Wilds' Sterling Circus was a one-ring grandstand feature at Oregon events, including the state fair, during the summer. The Liebel Family Circus was another fairgrounds organization. It appeared in at least New York, Pennsylvania, and Wisconsin under a 90-foot by 60-foot tent. The one-ring display lasted 45 minutes, which was about the norm for this type of show. Liebel carried a baby elephant. Roger Boyd Jr. had a circus on the midway of the Childress Shows Carnival at fairs in May and June. The one-ring performance lasted a half hour. The Swan Bros. Circus, a two-person affair run by Andy and Mike Swan of Sacramento, played fairs and malls in California.

The troupes, many of them quite small, which played ball parks, outdoor arenas, and shopping malls, often under the auspices of service clubs, composed yet another branch of the industry. The biggest of this type was Tommy Bentley's and Chuck Clancy's Bentley Bros. Circus. Bentley presented a three-ring grandstand show for groups such as the police and the firefighters. The performance included some well-known acts such as Josip Marcan and his cats and David Smith and his cannon act. The show toured California in April and May, and after a lay-off appeared in the Midwest, East, and South from July to September.

The Pickle Family Circus, a non-profit corporation managed by Larry Pisoni, celebrated its tenth anniversary in 1985. It

played in California, Oregon, Washington, and Colorado. The performance, which included juggling, a trampoline act, and a gorilla parody number, usually took place outdoors in a side-walled tent, although some dates were indoors. This outfit attracted the attention of serious theater critics, who viewed it as a form of mime and modern dance.

John Winn's Circus Europorama exhibited in ball parks and grand stands in California, Oregon, and Washington during the summer. It carried a six-piece band and used one of Donny Johnson's elephants. This one used a heavy phone promotion. The All American Circus opened in Las Vegas in May and toured California later that month. The performance had Doug Terranova and his tigers and Gaylord Maynard and his horse. Stan Kramien's Hollywood Animal Actors show played California, Oregon, and Washington on July. Many of the four-footed performers had appeared in films and television. Heidi Wendany and her horses were with this one. Another animal show was Golden Ark Animal Attractions, owned by Bill and Carol Golden. Basically a travelling petting zoo with some animal rides, it used a 90-foot by 60-foot tent and displayed at shopping malls, celebrations, and fairs. The TNT Royal Olympic Circus, a small troupe playing shopping malls, opened its twenty-fifth season in February in Torrance, California. Its season was sadly curtailed by the death of owner Earl Tegge in April.

The auditorium, armory, and gym shows continued to be a part of the circus scene in 1985. Often playing under the auspices of small town school groups, many of them played split seasons. Jimmy Cole's All Star TV Circus was the most established organization in this kind of show business. He opened in Milton, Pennsylvania, in late January, toured New York, and closed at Sayre, Pennsylvania, in late March. Billy Martin was the announcer of the 75-minute show; he also did a gorilla parody turn. Jim Normark's International All Star Circus, managed by Hines Rucker, had dates in the South, East, and Midwest from at least February to June. After taking the summer off, the show reopened on August 29 in New Hampshire and continued until December. Normark had a baby African elephant named Karen who had been trained by Army McGuire. John Strong had two gym shows appearing in the West, Midwest, and Canada until June, when he closed them to take his first vacation in 40 years. The "vacation" entailed visiting other shows and attending the Great Circus Parade in Milwaukee. In the late summer through late December he had four small troupes on the road. Terrell Jacobs III was a clown with Strong.

Jose Cole had his circus in armories and gyms in small towns in Minnesota, the Dakotas, and Iowa from March to May. The performance featured Jorge Barreda and his cats and Bones Craig and a single elephant act. Peter Sturgis was the ringmaster and an organ and drums supplied the music. Bill Garden's Holiday Hippo-



Billposting was not an entirely lost art in 1985, as shown in this empty for James Hertz's Circus at Fairmont, West Virginia. Unfortunately, a flood caused the date to be cancelled. David Orr photo.

drome show from Sarasota played from February to June and then from September to December. James Hertz's Intercontinental Circus exhibited along the Ohio River in the spring and then again in November. The show was trapped in a Clarksburg, West Virginia, armory by a November flood, which caused the cancellation of the next date in Fairmont. Cathy Rogers was featured as the singing ringmistress. Ray MacMahon's Royal American Circus, out of Jackson, Mississippi, played gyms and auditoriums in the South in May and June and from late September to December. The Rolling Diamonds roller skating act were among the displays. Al Stencell had his Super Circus International at a few dates in Canada. The Marvel Circus had dates in New York in July and August and also appeared in Kingston, Jamaica. Billy Gunga toured his Circus Kamala in October and November.

The Circus Galaxy, also called the Royal Palace Circus, appeared in Florida in March, New York in June and July, and the Midwest from September to December. Produced by Mearl Johnson, the Harry Dubsky family put on much of the performance. Tommy Lunsford's American Showtime Family Circus had a five-week tour of Florida, Georgia, and the Carolinas in April and May, and played the same territory in November and December. A troupe of dogs were the only animal actors in the two-hour show. Beck's Circorama, owned by Harry Beck, also performed in small towns in the South. This may have been the same show which used the Rudy Bros. title in New England in the summer; veteran Rudy Jacobi was connected with this one. John and Betty Reid's Reid Bros. Circus opened its spring tour on May 3 and closed on June 15. It exhibited in Oregon, Washington, Idaho, Montana, and Wyoming, and featured Bucky Steele's elephants and liberty horses, Frank Mazersky's

tigers, and a three-piece band. In October Reid Bros. had a string of Texas dates under a Bruno tent. The Peanut Circus made one- and two-day dates all over the map from April to December. The No Elephant Circus toured the East from May to December, making a number of appearances in New York City.

Some circuses were hard to categorize. A San Francisco-based group of clowns, jugglers, and acrobats blended the circus and the theatre into a production called Make-A-Circus in California in June and July. First half of the program was a play called "The Circus Comes to Toyland" and later in the performance a short workshop on basic circus skills was conducted. The Rancho de Santiago Country Circus was framed to play company events such as picnics for 800 to 3000 people. It worked from May to October in southern California. The Royal Lichtenstein Circus, a non-profit venture of the Catholic Church managed by Nick Weber, S.J., appeared in Florida and the west coast, playing both indoor and outdoor dates. The Circus Alleluia, an outreach program of the Calvary Temple International Christian Center in Temple Terrace, Florida, was a combination circus and religious revival which appeared mainly in Florida but made appearances as far north as Pennsylvania and as far west as Texas from May to December. Founded by Bill Greenman, the circus was a means to bring Christianity to communities, and the performance was strongly religious.

Youth circuses exhibited across the country. The Wenatchee Youth Circus made its thirty-third tour, appearing in Washington state from June to August. It moved on two chartered buses and its own flatbed trailer which carried props and mainly exhibited in ball parks and outdoor arenas. Sarasota's Sailor Circus appeared in Sarasota and Jacksonville, Florida in March and April, and 13 members of the show appeared in Japan during the summer, a great summer job by any measure. The Florida State University Flying High Circus played Jacksonville in March and was at Callaway Gardens under canvas during the summer. The Illinois State University Gamma Phi Circus performed at Normal, Illinois, in April. The Peru Circus City Festival Circus was held during that city's annual circus event in July. Dolly Jacobs was grand marshall in the parade. The Great Redlands Y Circus, produced by Warren Wood, displayed in California. The Circus of the Kids was in Connecticut from June to August and played Boston over the Christmas school break. The Janus Circus took 20 kids from Harlem and trained them in a variety of circus acts. It appeared in the New York City area from April to August and did some performances in the New York City area from April to August and did some performances in the New York City area. Ed Sheehan's Windy City Circus performed at community events in the Chicago area. The troupe acquired a new headquarters in nearby Antioch, Illinois, where youngsters sharpened their circus skills.

Many amusement and wildlife parks presented circuses. Examples included Parc Safari in Quebec, which had Circus

Safari featuring Alan Gold and his lions and tigers. The Emmett Kelly Jr. Circus appeared under a Bruno tent at the International Wildlife Park in Grand Prairie, Texas, from May through August. Kelly later produced Michigan dates in September and November. The venerable Benson's Wild Animal Park in New Hampshire had a circus. Benson's filed for bankruptcy in February and was sold in August. Circus World in Florida included circus acts. The Circus World Museum had the Woodcock elephants, the Strong's horses and dogs, the Ayala family of aerialists, and house clown Jim Williams under its big top. The Baraboo, Wisconsin, attraction made a comeback in 1985 under the leadership of new director Greg Parkinson and board chairman Paul Ingrassia, and returned the Great Circus Parade to Milwaukee on July 14.

At least two foreign troupes played the United States in 1985. The Chinese Magic Circus appeared in Florida in March. The Chinese Golden Dragon Circus from Taiwan toured in the late fall with stops including Oklahoma City, and St. Cloud, Minnesota. Paul Kaye spent the beginning of the year in Japan, where he had two circuses. One was called the American Aerial Circus; the other, the Great American Circus. The former was a one-ring stage show while the latter was a tented affair. Among the performers making the trip were Wally Eastwood, juggler; Jackie Zerbin, aerialist; Gene Mendez, high wire; Jim and Tepa Hall, bear act; and John Cueno's tiger and elephant acts. In August, Kaye had a show in Hawaii, and he finished the year by producing the Evansville, Indiana, Shrine circus from November 28 to December 1.

Many showman produced only a handful of dates or even a single date, and limited their circus to a matter of weeks or days. Often the producer was a performer who spent much of the year with his or her own act. Some of these individuals may have had more extensive management activity than listed here. For example, Borger Bros.-Circus Berlin, owned by Elton Berlin and Norman Borger, produced the Du Page County Police Association in Wheaton, Illinois, from June 13 to 16. It was their third year at this date, and the show used a rented 150-foot round top with three 50-foot middle pieces. The strong performance included Josip Marcan and his 2 lions and 10 tigers, Donny Johnson and his three elephants, and the Smahas and their horses. David J. Mobbs' again had his Circus USA in Miami in October for 12 days. Carla Wallenda directed a circus at the New Martinsville, West Virginia, fair in August. Jorge Barreda had the free circus at the Mississippi State Fair in October with Dolly Jacobs and the Carrillo Bros. Old pro Gil Gray presented the Dr. Pepper Circus at the Texas State Fair in Dallas in October. Bob Snowden produced the Manchester, New Hampshire, Shrine circus in April. Norbert Kreisch managed a show in New Orleans in September. Carl and Stephen Larsson had a gym date in Miami Shores, Florida, in March, and produced a show under George Hanneford's big top



The Borger Bros.-Circus Berlin exhibited under a tent for the police in Wheaton, Illinois, in June. Rosalie Hoffman photo.

for the Miami Shrine. The Larssons spent part of October promoting Roberts Bros. dates in Florida.

Other short-lived circuses included the Wood family's Circus Fantasy, which appeared at the Shelby County Fair in Sidney, Ohio, in August and September under a big top. Bill Bleisner had the World of Magic Circus in an auditorium in Holyoke, Massachusetts, for a 90-minute show in May. Acts included Gracie Hanneford and her poodles, and some magic. Walter and Karen Child's Children's Circus trouped in the East in May, appearing in gyms. Gary Johnson and Kari Jones had the Big Time Circus at the Santa Rose, California, Harvest Festival. Circus D'Carlo appeared in Texas in early March and had a date in Las Vegas in late November. The Showman's Circus took place in Gibsonton, Florida, in January; it proceeds went to local children's services and cancer research. Pete Ivanov put together the annual Showfolks Circus in Sarasota in December.

Las Vegas continued to be a great circus center as many casinos booked circus acts in their lounges. Bobby Berosini and his orangutans headlined the Sawdust show. Also on the bill was world class juggler Kris Kreamo. Kenneth Feld's Siegfried and Roy magic show, which used an elephant and white tigers, packed them in at the Frontier. The program also included a unit of the King Charles Troupe, and a Chinese acrobatic and martial arts act. The show at the Riviera featured Roby Gasser and his seals and Douglas MacValley and his Globe of Death. The Circus Circus Casino featured continuous circus acts including two of the finest flying acts in the world, the Flying Cavarettas and the Flying Farfans. The elephant Bertha, who has performed at the Nugget Casino at Sparks, Nevada, for years, was presented with an honorary lifetime membership in the Reno Musicians Union. Numerous circus acts found employment at the hundreds of sports and auto shows which occurred year round and as single acts at festivals, fairs, and other attractions.

The most notable death in 1985 was John Ringling North. Others who passed

on during the year included Emanuel Zucchini, Jr., a member of the famous cannonballing family; Herman Wallenda, the last male member of the original Great Wallendas troupe; Frank Dean, great trick roper on many circuses and rodeos; Don Kidder, retired electrician and trainman on Cole and Ringling-Barnum; Boots Sallee, rider on Ken Maynard, and Tom Mix shows; Alfredo Landone, old time Ringling-Barnum clown; Chester "Bobo" Barnett, old time clown; Earl Tegge, owner of TNT Circus; Ted (Akeman) La Velda, well known high grass performer; Freida La Velda Timson, performer in 1930s and 1940s and ex-wife of Ted La Velda; Keith Killinger, Ringling and Shrine circus bandmaster; Roy Valentine, member of the Flying Valentines trapeze act during Ringling under canvas days; Gus Talliaferro, executive on Zack Terrell's Cole Bros. in 1940s; Catherine Hanneford, grand dame of Hanneford Circus; Kirby "Sky King" Grant, TV cowboy and ex-Carson and Barnes star; Virgil "Ky" Seagraves, ex-Mills Bros. elephant boss; and Ben Moulton, retired aerialist and swaypoler.

For all its flaws and imperfections, this review would be even less complete were it not for the help of those who took the time to write me about circuses they saw or send me photographs and other illustrative mater. It was a special pleasure to receive information from strangers, and this year I heard from more people than in the past. The following all provided useful data which was incorporated into this article: Steven Anderson, Andrew Bakner, George Bingaman, Norman Borger, Joe Bradbury, Arnold Brito, Pete Cash, Harry Chalfant, Fred Dahlinger, Barry DeChant, Ed Freeman, John Fulghum, Roland Gibbs, Ralph Hartman, Fred Heatley, Col. John Herriott, Al House, Don James, Bob Kitchen, Frank Mara, Don Marcks, Jim McRoberts, Bob Parkinson, Tom Parkinson, John Polacsek, Scott Pyles, David Reid, Jim Roller, L.A. Sadler, Ron Sanford, Mike Sporrer, Robert Sugerman, Leroy Sweetland, and Gordon Turner. Their efforts were greatly appreciated and I apologize if I have forgotten anyone. I would particularly like to thank Fred Pfening, Jr., whose help I too often take for granted, and who got me stated in this racket years ago when he parked his 5-year-old son on a elephant named Jesse on the Fred. J. Mack Circus. Thanks, Pop.

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THE AL G. BARNES' BIG FOUR-RING CIRCUS

1925

By Chang Reynolds

The final days of 1924 found the Al G. Barnes' Circus comfortably ensconced in its fine winterquarters at Palms, California. The site was familiarly known as Barnes' Circus City, or the Barnes' Zoo. It was open to the public and proved to be a great attraction to tourists and local southern Californians. Several new buildings and a large lake were in the process of completion; the latter was designed for a very large collection of birds, which included a dozen flamingos, crowned pigeons, wild geese, swans, cranes, emus, ostriches and other species. A new corral held twenty young bison which had arrived from Yellowstone National Park, camels, zebras, llamas, elks, sacred cattle, reindeer, water buffalo, and two baby yaks. A new seal den, 50 foot by 50 foot, had been constructed and was scheduled to be used for seals and sea lions on a permanent basis.

A new electric light system had been installed throughout the zoo and greatly added to its attractiveness. Carpenters had started the remodeling of Barnes' ranch house, which was destined to be one of the most beautiful homes in Palms. Additional grading in the back portions of the site was undertaken and new buildings were completed, including stables, for the work horses during the rainy season. Barnes did not intend to be caught again—as he had been in the spring of 1924—with the baggage stock at some far-off ranch. Frank Rooney was in charge of this work.

Trainers rehearsing new stock were Austin King and Carl Bruce. They were working a large group of Arabian horses which had recently arrived and Louis Roth and Bert Nelson were directing new acts involving the big cats. Some of the staff members were located at some distance from the quarters. These included John T. Backman, who was duck hunting in the Imperial Valley; Charles C. Cook in San Francisco; and George Tipton, steward, vacationing in the Hawaiian islands. Ac-

cording to this report of 3 January, Al G. Barnes visited the quarters each day to "fondle the baby giraffe, which had become a great pet." If this report is accurate, the animal must have been the survivor of the two giraffes deposited with Ansel Robinson in San Francisco at an unknown date. W.V. Hill's report to Don Francis indicated that one of the two animals died in a stable on Mission Street in that city and that the second was shipped to the Barnes' quarters but died enroute to Los Angeles. The report cited above seems to confirm that it did arrive at Palms, but never appeared with the show.

Ben Austin, the general agent, was in New York City at this time awaiting the arrival of black leopards, tigers, and a rhinoceros. This last animal never traveled with the circus, if it indeed did arrive at the eastern port. Also at quarters, working the ring stock, were Bert Dennis and Max Sabel. A new air calliope had been installed and Dick Allen played daily concerts for the visiting public. On Saturday and Sunday Charles Redrick and his band gave concerts to enhance the calliope music.

Of interest was the success of Austin King (not the horse trainer), who featured a complete miniature circus in conjunction with the film *North of 36* at Grauman's Metropolitan Theater in Los Angeles. Embellishing the display were two regular circus wagons, two canvas middle pieces, and a side-wall with poles. This display was so successful that it was re-located at Grauman's Million-Dollar Theatre for another

Al G. Barnes corraled menagerie, season of 1925. Note the variety of cages. At each end are Numbers 178 and 179, very long cages which had been built by the show's shops in recent years. Second cage from the left is a former John Robinson Ten Big Shows den while the next two with corner statues were once on Forepaugh-Sells. Ken Whipple Collection.



week. The title of the attraction was "The Sawdust Ring."

During the Christmas season radio broadcasting equipment was installed in Barnes' home and he aired several life histories of different wild animals that he had owned over the years. These "talks" were an undoubted success according to reports from quarters.

On 10 January *The Billboard* carried a report "on excellent authority" that the Al G. Barnes' Circus was being offered for sale "either as a whole and going concern, or in parcels and lots." It was stated that Al G. had approached several circus men whom he thought might be interested in the purchase. Two weeks later the paper reported that Barnes had telegraphed the editor to the effect that the circus was for sale "but only as a whole and going concern—not in parcels and lots—and at Al G. Barnes' own figure." The Barnes' telegram concluded with: "I had so many requests from parties who wanted to purchase the show that I decided I would give them a price." Nothing more came of this at this time except repeated statements in the Barnes' reports to *The Billboard* that the show had not been sold.

In February further reports from the Barnes' Circus City reached the showmen's weekly indicating that everything was moving smoothly toward the March opening of the show. Among other items a few are worth recording here. Leo Blondin and wife were scheduled to be on the season's tour, he in charge of the elephants. Charles C. Charles was to present two groups of seals and sea lions; Bob McKane was the trainer who was riding the cart pulled by Lotus on the zoo grounds; and Klinkhardt's midgets had concluded a ten-week engagement at Grauman's Egyptian Theater. George Tipton, Charles C. Cook, and Mr. and Mrs. Stonehouse had returned from their travels (the last named to be in charge of the quarters while the circus was traveling). The widow of James Morrow (a long-time employee of the show) was engaged as wardrobe mistress and was busy completing "spec" costumes. Reports also mentioned that the show would feature two spectacles in 1925, both with new costumes, new settings, and new music.

The staff, as announced in *The Billboard* on 21 March, included: Charles C. Cook, manager; H.I. McGlathery, treasurer; A. Wolff, auditor; J.B. Austin, general agent; J.C. Rhodes and F.W. Owens, local contractors; Thomas Dawson, contracting press agent; Austin King, advance press agent; Rex de Rosselli, press agent with the show; John T. Backman, equestrian director; Frank Rooney, general superintendent; T.F. Everett, superintendent of privileges; Charles Redrick, musical director; Nels Lauston, superintendent of reserved seats; C. Jensen, superintendent of canvas; Judd Bullock, trainmaster; Mike Tschudy, boss hostler; F. Carl, superintendent of commissary; E. Versteeg, superintendent of lights; Otto Billings, superintendent of properties; Sam Burgy, superintendent of ring stock; Jack King, superintendent of the working crew; W.J. Patterson and W.J.

Long, 24-hour agents; L.E. Blondin, superintendent of elephants and animals; Elmer McLaughlin, boss carpenter; Mike Welsh, blacksmith; Jack Glines, Manager Advance Car No. 1; Dick Manley, checker-up; and W.E. Mack, announcer. The show traveled on 30 cars, including the advance car.

The Al G. Barnes' Big Four-Ring Circus opened the 1925 season with a two-day engagement in the rain at Hollywood, California. It will be noted by the reader that the words "Wild Animal" had been deleted from the title. They were used, however, in a subordinate position. The reason for the change in title was that Barnes' was using a number of regular circus acts in the performance. Film stars and movie magnates attended the Hollywood performances and the press and public highly praised the new format of the show. The spectacle *Pocahontas* had a new cast according to the review and were dressed in new costumes and furnished with new music. The 36 new buff-colored horses, which had replaced those lost in the fire in 1924, worked perfectly. In addition to the new circus acts there were hippodrome races to conclude the performance following the second spectacle—*Pageant of All Nations*.

A seven-day engagement at Praeger Park in Los Angeles followed the two-day Hollywood opening. This lot barely accommodated the show, but with adept maneuvering it was squeezed into the allotted space. Most of the canvas was new—all white and trimmed with red. Lew Berg, of the Downey Bros. Tent Co. of Los Angeles, was responsible for the design and workmanship, but unfortunately the new big top was not completed in time for this stand.

Two changes had a major impact on the Barnes' Circus. One was the lack of the parade and consequently the absence of parade vehicles. The second difference was the inclusion of circus acts in the performance. Regarding the former, Joe Bradbury states: "Although no street parades were given in 1925 the show continued to carry three of the wagons built new for the 1922 season by Lewis Bert using the Bode carvings. There were the Girl and Lion ticket wagon, the Cupids air calliope, and the Atlas and Neptune steam calliope. Photos show the Cupids wagon parked by the band stand and the air calliope instrument played with the regular band during the performance. The Girl and Lion wagon was spotted on the midway where it served as a ticket wagon and it is assumed that the Atlas and Neptune wagon steam calliope gave daily lot concerts. If any other parade type wagons were carried they do not show up in photos. In all probability they were left in quarters. Baggage wagons can be seen in photos carrying numbers formerly assigned to parade vehicles."

In the article reviewing the circus at Los Angeles the *Billboard* correspondent first discussed the side-show operated by W.B. Chamberlain. It presented a beautiful appearance with the new top and new banners and, according to the writer, was probably the best of its type ever presented by



Al G. Barnes elephant herd, season of 1925. Third from left is Vance with one of his tusks missing. Photo by E.C. Bumann.

Al G. Barnes. A band of Scots Highlanders furnished the music instead of the usual minstrel musicians. William Haley and George Douglas were on the ticket boxes and Mrs. Chamberlain tended the door with several assistants. Featured on the platforms inside the tent at this time (there were to be additions later which greatly improved the line-up) were: High Bill, the Texas giant; Prof. Frank Martin, tattooed man; the Royal Lilliputians, twelve mid-gets; Prof. Prescott and Jerry, mental telepathists; Madame Olga, snake enchantress; "Happy" Ethel, fat girl; Stevens and Foster, comedy jugglers; Hawaiian singers and dancers; and Will Z. Smith, Punch and Judy, magic, and lecturer. There were seven bagpipers in the Scots band.

The menagerie featured, along with the usual caged displays, "Joe Martin" and "Juggs," an orang-utan and a chimpanzee, under the care of Jack Coleman. There were probably eight elephants on the show at the opening. They were: Ruth, Babe, Jewel, Pearl, Jenny, Vance, Barney, and Countess. The great Tusko remained in quarters at Palms and later, at some unknown date during the tour, Barney was shipped to Mexico in charge of George Emerson. When the circus arrived at Sedro Wooley, Washington, on 21 May, four baby elephants were delivered on the lot. They were part of a shipment of wild ani-

mals delivered by Frank Buck in San Francisco earlier in the month. Whether there were any of the young elephants delivered earlier traveling with the show is not known.

Some confusion occurs regarding the identity of these four baby elephants delivered in Washington. Bill Woodcock wrote the author on 17 May 1960 that he had a photo of Jim Dooley, former Ringling-Barnum trainer, and four punks standing in front of a stock car in 1925. According to Woodcock: "One is a little tusker named Cedro (Sedro). There were three little females—Palm, Culver, and Venice." In an earlier letter, Woodcock had stated that "Red" McKay "had traded a good punk named Venice for that old Countess bull." Reliable information from the zoo in Milwaukee, Wisconsin, states that their records indicate that Venice was received on 4 June 1923. This seems to indicate that Woodcock was in error in labeling one of the baby elephants received at Sedro Wooley as Venice. Or perhaps, the name was used on this second animal—thus creating two with the name of Venice. This is unlikely since there is no record of another elephant with that name on the Barnes' Circus. Only Palm and Culver remained in the years following, which leaves historians with the thought that the Barnes' Show somehow lost several baby elephants in the 1920s.

In the big top *The Billboard* correspondent greeted Nels Lausten and John T. Backman. The ushers were dressed in blue, gray, and black uniforms and, of course, Backman wore his usual, but new, white flannel costume. The band members were dressed in red uniforms. Rex de Rosselli

Huge crowd in Al G. Barnes open air menagerie at Bend, Oregon, August 3, 1925. Photo by E.C. Bumann.





had worked long hours to improve the spec, *Pocahontas at the Court of Queen Anne*. It featured new principals, new costumes, and new music. Instead of the display of fireworks at the close of the spectacle, Rosselli had developed a system of steam forced through pipes into the rings, giving the effect, as the report stated, "of geysers of Yellowstone National Park." Colored lights played on the clouds of steam to give added beauty to this improved display. Morrie B. Streeter, who collaborated with Rosselli in scoring the music, was scheduled to travel with the circus for several weeks in order to perfect the orchestration. All electrical effects for the spectacle were designed by Carl Taylor.

Featured in the spec were: Maree Baudet as Pocahontas; Garbriel Munze, as Capt. John Smith; Wellington Mack, as Okomuche; and Chief Big Tree as the Medicine Man. Following the opening scene came the tournament which included the band of 23 musicians; ten buff-colored horses with elaborately costumed riders; three elephants in spangled robes; four couriers on horseback; a team of buffaloes; a tribe of eighteen Indians; three more elephants; four camels; a band of six Eskimos; eight zebras; and a miscellaneous collection of monkeys, dogs, and semi-domesticated animals. This display closed with Pocahontas riding in an elegant carriage.

The second part of the spectacle, the throne scene at the court of Queen Anne, came next. The cast included: Emma Leigh, as Queen Anne; Irene Allen, as the Lady in Waiting; Jack Le Blanc, as the Courier; Charles K. Miller, as King James; Wellington Mack, as Minister to the King; and Joyce de Rosselli, as the Page.

This spectacle was probably the most outstanding of any ever presented by the Al G. Barnes Circus. In the early years there had been only a parade or tournament type of display at the beginning of the performance. In 1917, with *The Conquest of Nyanza*, Barnes began to use a more elaborate opening with more beautiful costumes, vocals, and improved music by the band. This was repeated under the same title in 1918 and then the show offered variations on the theme of *Alice in Jungleland* for five years (1919-1923). It started with this great spectacle in two parts (*Pocahontas at the Court of Queen Anne*) in the spring of 1924 and continued to use it through 1926. *Alladin and the Parade of Gold* ushered in the 1927 season and were used through 1929—after Barnes had sold the show. After 1929 *Persia and the Pa-*

Al G. Barnes Circus on the lot at Twin Falls, Idaho, August 14, 1925. Photo by E.C. Bumann.

geant of Pekin was the title for two years and *The Pageant of Gold* was used through the middle 1930s. Of course, by then Al G. Barnes had departed and the quality of the spec—at least the operatic character—had been lost.

In 1925 the spectacle was followed by the introduction of the famous midget troupe (Klinkhardt's); High Bill, the giant who marched with the small folks; Jack Coleman and "Joe Martin"; Frank Rooney who drove sixty head of draft horses around the track (later the number of horses were increased); and Dot Whitney with Lotus, the famous hippopotamus.

With John T. Backman blowing the whistle and W.E. Mack announcing, the program of displays began to unfold.

1. Ring 1—Six-pony drill, with Bert Dennis at the whip
Arena—Tiger riding a horse, Louis Roth
Ring 2—Six-pony drill, H. Smith
2. Ring 1—Group of elephants, Irene Grizzell
Arena—Trained rabbits, Lillian Hopkins
Ring 2—Group of elephants, Billy Mack
3. Stage 1—Penny Parker Family, contortionists and gymnasts
Stage 2—Tim Buckley (the first Barnes' elephant trainer) and a group of sixteen white cats
Track—Clowns: Jack McAfee, produc-

Al G. Barnes coaches during stop on a Sunday run, season of 1925. Photo by E.C. Bumann.



ing clown; Toby Tyler, Dutch Marco, Bill Ward, Tom Plank, George Rearick, Jack Le Blanc, Dan McAvoy, and Eddie Russell

4. Ring 1—Eight tandem horses, Max Sabel
Arena—Group of pumas, Helen Roth
Ring 2—Eight tandem horses, Austin King
5. Ring 1—Performing dogs, Bob Norton
Arena—Lion riding an elephant, Ruth Wolfe
Ring 2—Performing dogs, Joe Dokes
6. Ring 1—Leaping dogs
Arena—"Joe Martin" with Jack Coleman
Ring 2—Monkey slide-for-life
7. Ring 1—Performing llamas, William Kingston
Arena—Bear act, Bert Nelson
Ring 2—Performing zebras, Austin King
Track—Wire Walkers, Zarelli and Zarelli
8. Dove Song March—the operatic sextet; consisting of Miss Leigh, Miss Allen, Miss Kima, Wellington Mack, Charles Miller, and Gabriel Munze
9. Ring 1—Posing horses with Agnes Lausten and Margaret Graham
Ring 2—Posing horses with Margaret Munzo and Ethel Long
10. Ring 1—Posing dogs with Irene Grizzell
Arena—Dutch Marco and his singing mule
Ring 2—Posing dogs with Bobby Todd and Dot Whitney
11. Announcement of the Concert by Slim Wilson—a Wild West and Indian Congress
12. Ring 1—Trained pigs, Bob Norton
Arena—Twelve male lions, Bert Nelson
Ring 2—Trained pigs, Dutch Marco

13. Ring 1—Twelve Liberty horses, Max Sabel
Arena—Zebra Liberty act, Bert Dennis
Ring 2—Twelve Liberty horses, Austin King
14. Ring 1—Trained seals and sea lions, Charles C. Charles
Arena—Polar bear act, Bert Nelson
Ring 2—Performing camels, Max Sabel
15. Twelve girls performing on swinging ladders scattered throughout the tent.
16. Ring 1—Trained goats, Dutch Marco
Arena—Panther riding a zebra, Dot Whitney
Ring 2—Trained goats, Toby Tyler
17. Ring 1—"The Act Beautiful"—twelve horse menage act
Arena—Lion riding a horse, Lois Hopkins
Ring 2—Twelve horse menage act
(These twenty-four horses replaced those destroyed in the train fire near Willows, California, 1 October 1924.)
Riders: Agnes Lausten, Margaret Graham, Roth Wolfe, Billy Mack, Dot Whitney, Edna Ambler, Golda Backman, Margaret Munzo, Nellie Karino, Betty Kenyon, Bobby Todd, Erna Brown, Dorothy De Von, Irene Grizzell, Pearlita, Helen Roth, Babe Young, Nettie Rooney, Lillian Hopkins, Ethel Chase, Peggy Norton, Gertrude Dennis, Neva Patsy, and Miss Gallagher. The act concluded on the Hippodrome Track by waltzing, dancing, and prancing horses. Betty Kenyon on her prize horse and Bert Dennis on a magnificent equine were featured.
18. A beautiful act that featured seventy-

Al G. Barnes lot at Helena, Montana following big top blowdown, July 17, 1925. At right beside the wrecked bandstand is the Cupids air calliope. Note the two chutes that lead to the steel arena. While in Montana in 1925 the show suffered several blowdowns coming in rapid succession. These were never mentioned in the *Billboard* accounts nor in the season's route book. It is only through photos by troupers on the show that year, E.C. Bumann, a bandsman, and Toby Tyler, a clown, that we have a record of these blowdowns. Photo by E.C. Bumann.



Unloading Al G. Barnes flat cars, season of 1925. First wagon down the runs is the Atlas and Neptune steam calliope. Toby Tyler photo in the Pfening Archives.

- five cockatoos, macaws, parrots and pigeons. Presenting the birds were Marion Norton, Agnes Lausten, Pat Clancy, Dorothy Kenyon, Billy Mack, and Lois Hopkins. At the close of the act, after the ladies had performed with the cockatoos, macaws, and parrots, the doves and pigeons were released from the top of the tent and they flew to the outstretched arms of the girls.
19. Ring 1—Elephants, presented by Babe Young
Arena—Leopard act, presented by Maree Baudet
Ring 2—Elephants, presented by Dorothy De Von
20. Ring 1—Performing buffaloes and oxen, Fred Sautori
Arena—Ten African lions, Bert Nelson
Ring 2—Goodnight pony, Gertrude Dennis
21. The Spectacle of All Nations
This display, conceived by Rex de Rosselli, presented all the horses being ridden by a representative of every country on the globe. Pony and monkey races and Roman Standing Races were also presented. At the end of the races the cloaks of the riders displayed a 30-foot United States flag and the audience rose to sing *The Star Spangled Banner*. In the background, behind the large flag, was Columbia

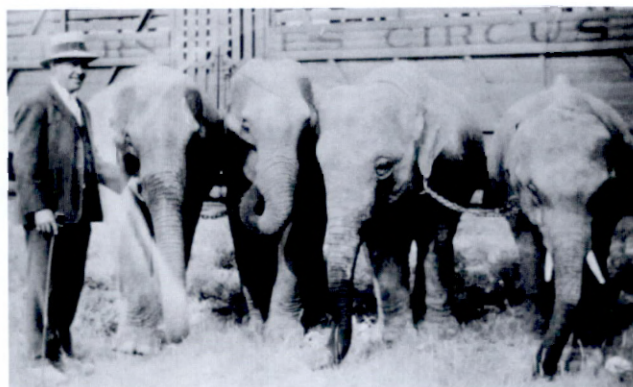
guarded on each side by a soldier and sailor.

Omitted from the program for some reason (and corrected later) were two displays featuring Louis Roth—one with a large group of Bengal tigers and the other with a group of a dozen female lions. *The Billboard's* apology in a later issue stated that Roth was the principal animal trainer with the Al G. Barnes' Circus. (Reading the program review cited above one could easily conceive that Bert Nelson worked most of the cage acts. It is not known where Roth's two acts fitted into the program.)

The Hollywood opening stand produced three packed houses and a good matinee despite much rain. In fact, the circus had five successive days of inclement weather at the start of the tour. It had very good business in Los Angeles and after that seven days it moved to San Pedro, Long Beach, Alhambra, and Redondo Beach where it encountered a sandy lot. Despite the unstable conditions the matinee opened on time. Another week of southern California stands brought the show to Ventura and Santa Paula. From this last stand it jumped to Mojave, on the desert, and then over the Tehachapi Mountains to Bakersfield in the San Joaquin Valley.

Joining the Barnes' Circus during these opening weeks were the Slaymen Ali

Jimmy Dooley, former elephant boss with the R.T. Richards show, with the four young elephants that arrived on the Al G. Barnes Circus in 1925. The tusker at right is Cedro (or Sedro). Joe Bradbury Collection.





Troupe of acrobats and the Pina Family from South America, who featured wire-walker Anita Pina. Tom Plank and wife, Lela, also joined as did Doc Cunningham and his son. The father took over the announcing on the big show while his son became a feature of the concert. The riders in the Roman standing races were Bob Morton and Mark Smith. In this report, Rex de Rosselli stated that Frank Rooney daily drove 180 head of draft horses in one team around the hippodrome track—almost impossible to believe. A report from Bob Taber in Riverside mentioned that the show played to two good houses in that city, but another report from Pomona indicated that business was only fair due to bad weather.

Good weather, fine crowds, and adequate lots accompanied the Barnes' tour through the central valley of California. The new big top canvas had arrived—180 feet by 500 feet—and Chamberlain's side-show was much improved with the addition of Professor Cerny, Princess Zorada, Tropoollo (frog boy), Carron (the Congo cannibal), Zippi (dog-faced boy), Prof. Allen (sword swallower), and Nellie Carl, whose hair was nine feet long. Bob Callicut took over the lecturing chores so that Will Z. Smith could devote his time to magic and Punch and Judy. The other features, already listed, remained with the side-show.

Frank Rooney left the show for a few days to go to San Francisco to purchase horses. He returned about the first of May with twenty head of new stock. Alfred Wolfe returned to the big wagon after undergoing a bout with the flu. Bert Dennis, who had been thrown from "Sky Rocket" recovered from the fall and was again riding this magnificent horse. Al G. had purchased the renowned Arabian stallion, "Sultan," and was greeting the crowds at each performance from the saddle.

Also by early May, "Joe Martin" was operating a small auto which he drove around the show grounds. Ruth Wolfe, after an illness of three weeks, returned and was again riding her horse, "Rosebud." Another new feature in the performance was Agnes Lausten performing on a swinging ladder which was studded with electric lights. Louis Roth added a new turn to his act of fourteen tigers. He fed the cats bits of meat from a table around which he had some of the tigers seated. Also mentioned in the report from Palo Alto, where business was big, were the dar-

Al G. Barnes loaded flat cars, season of 1925. Note unusual vehicle at far right. Toby Tyler photo in the Pfening Archives.

ing riders Betty Kenyon and Kharvina Burbeck. Bob Morton suffered injuries when he fell during the Roman standing race, but he was able to return to his job within a few days. One other item of note was the introduction of cafeteria service in the privilege car by Clifford Clifford. This operation anticipated the elimination of the cook house in 1927, when the show's entire personnel were fed from a cafeteria.

The tour from Bakersfield to Ashland, Oregon, occupied three weeks. San Francisco was not played but Oakland, across the bay, was occupied for three days by the Barnes' Circus. Good matinees and night houses were recorded during the three-day stand. All the other towns played in California were one-day stands—apparently without incident. The show arrived in Ashland on Monday, 4 May, and continued to make towns in Oregon's Willamette Valley through to Portland, which was a two-day date on the 11th and 12th. At Salem, Oregon, Harry Bortz, employee of the show, was hospitalized after he had been run down and seriously injured by a drunken driver from a nearby town.

Astoria was the final Oregon stand and the show then entered Washington for nine days. Seattle was another two-day date during this time. While the show was in Seattle, Erma Brown fell from her trapeze and was hospitalized with a broken wrist and a damaged spine. In spite of the fact that the Al G. Barnes' Circus had played many of these northwestern towns less

Al G. Barnes Circus on the lot at Thermopolis, Wyoming, July 12, 1925. Toby Tyler photo in the Pfening Archives.



than a year earlier, crowds that taxed the seating capacity were a daily occurrence.

After the Bellingham date on 23 May the circus moved into British Columbia for four one-day stands at Vancouver, Chilliwack, Penticton, and Nelson. It then returned to the state of Washington for two days. At Spokane, on Memorial Day, the show had trouble obtaining a lot since the old circus lot had been converted into a baseball park. Word was received during mid-May that Frank Buck had arrived in San Francisco with a cargo of wild animals which included four elephants (delivered to the show at Sedro-Wooley), five tigers, a leopard, five pythons, fifty monkeys among other animals. This report indicated that Al G. Barnes had purchased most of the big animals.

The Vancouver stand was a record day for attendance and the show gave three performances with a turnaway at the last show. Another problem arose in Spokane when the daily paper demanded a reward of many free tickets before it would give advertising space to the show. The circus turned this blatant request down and still had a large attendance at the two performances. After the problem in Spokane, the Barnes' Show made a one performance stand on Sunday, 31 May, at Troy, Montana. Business was good.

On 1 June the Al G. Barnes' Circus again returned to Canada to make a series of dates in British Columbia, Alberta, Saskatchewan, and Manitoba. Record business greeted the show at many towns with Lethbridge, Alberta, being the weakest date due to forty degree temperature for the entire day. While the show was on its Canadian tour, Al G. Barnes was absent for several days while he made a trip to San Francisco. He went there to direct the shipment of the wild animal cargo which in all probability was stored by Ansel Robinson. All the animals and birds were sent to the Palms Circus City—a total of over 700 having been added to that zoo during the spring and early summer months. Carl Taylor, electrician, also departed for Palms to construct a new lighting system for the quarters. Louis Roth displayed, in a special set-up in the menagerie, a female tiger and her five newly born cubs. Sadie Clark, an accomplished performer, had developed a teeth slide from the top of the tent to the ground which drew great applause and Joe Clark became a concert feature with his Australian whip-cracking turn. James Dooley joined to take over as elephant su-

perintendent and Mr. and Mrs. James Corbin and Babe Davis departed. Jack McAfee temporarily replaced Bob Morton in the Roman standing races.

Madame Elsie Baker, double-bodied woman, rejoined the show in the Northwest and made the second Canadian tour, but was injured during a performance at Fargo, North Dakota, and, a couple of days later, was hospitalized at Glendive. Another performer, Erma Brown, who was injured at Seattle, had returned to the show but was not able to resume her part in the performance.

After the Canadian dates—the last at Winnipeg, Manitoba—the Barnes' Circus entered North Dakota at Grafton and played four dates in that state. It then went to Montana for five towns and Wyoming for two dates. Indeed, the circus wandered quite a few miles in this region during July, August and early September before settling down to a regular route toward the East. From Gillette, Wyoming, a Sunday date, the Barnes' show entered Nebraska for three cities and then turned to the west for six days in Colorado in early July. This run included a two-day stand at Denver. From Fort Collins it re-entered Wyoming and then went back to Montana for a long string of ten cities. It even went into Idaho for a few towns before returning to Washington and Oregon for another eleven days. Then it moved to Idaho again; then Utah; returned to Idaho; and then back to Wyoming (for three stands); then into Utah again; and again to Colorado for a week; before taking a determined course to Oklahoma and Texas. From 31 August through 4 September the show was idle due to unseasonable flooding in this area and lost all performances during that period.

This amazing route—as far east as Nebraska and then back to Oregon and Washington—is difficult to understand. Nothing in the notes from the show indicated a reason for this wandering, back-tracking route in July and August of 1925. A perusal of the routes of other circuses does not reveal any serious competition. The Ringling-Barnum show, headed for the Northwest, did not enter Montana until 17 August but it played straight through to Seattle within seventeen days. At the time the Big One came into Montana, the Barnes' Circus was in Salt Lake City and remained in Utah and Wyoming as the Ringling-Barnum outfit moved west. The one big circus that could have contributed



Al G. Barnes corraled menagerie, season of 1925. Toby Tyler photo in Pfening Archives.

to the unusual movements of the Barnes' show was Sells Floto, which was entering the region at this time. It played Salt Lake City, and paraded, on Labor Day. The Barnes' Circus had made that town on 17 August. At any rate, on the 12th of September, the Barnes' show left Colorado after its stand at Lamar and, after one stand in Kansas, arrived in Oklahoma for nearly two weeks of towns.

Reports of activities on the show during this erratic tour indicated the usual number of visitors and activities of members of the circus. Col. Tim McCoy and family were guests of Mr. Barnes at Cheyenne, Wyoming. Bert Bowers of the American Circus Corporation spent two days on the show at Colorado Springs and with Al G. in company visited the Garden of the Gods and later Yellowstone National Park. On the second tour of Montana the management entertained orphans in Helena. Between shows at this stand several of the circus stars went to the War Veteran's Hospital and put on a display of their talents. Among those entertaining the veterans were "Spud" Redrick and his band; "Dutch" Marco, Bill Ward, Joe Davis, the Martinez Trio, George Readrick, Danny McAvoy, of the clown contingent; the Mohammed Ali Troupe of Arabs; "High Bill," the Texas giant; the Clark Sisters; Maree Baudet and Gabriel Munzo, who sang songs from the spectacle; Charles K.

Loading canvas on the Al G. Barnes lot at Helper, Utah, season of 1925. The show played Helper August 30 then remained on the lot through September 4 unable to make scheduled stands due to washouts on the Denver & Rio Grand Railroad. Toby Tyler photo in Pfening Archives.



Miller, Mr. Lancaster, Inez Kema, Irene Allen, and Emily Leigh, with additional song numbers; and the Indian dancers.

A new pad room top from Driver Bros. was delivered. Frank Rooney added a number of baggage horses and baby animals were born—three pumas, two brown bears, and a Shetland pony. During this part of the tour, at the Barnes' Zoo in Palms, California, a yak, two water buffalo, six Siberian tigers, two leopards, five seals, thirty-six monkeys, and some small water fowl were new arrivals.

New personnel who arrived during this same period were: Lady June Lawries, magician, for the side show; Steward Whitehouse, press representative ahead of the show (Austin King returned to the show from the advance to assist Charles C. Cook). Lois De Lisle, Patsy Clancy, Adrian Gallagher, Margaret Graham, Bessie Clark, Agnes Lausten, and Irene Grizzell, already members of the troupe, were added to the aerial display. Sammy Cunningham and the Davis Troupe became a part of the performance.

There were two capacity houses at Wallace, Idaho, and the tents were packed at Walla Walla, Washington. The show made a 261-mile run from Kennewick, Washington, to Bend, Oregon, on Sunday, 2 August, where it played to two packed houses on Monday. Business at the next two stands, The Dalles and Pendleton, was only fair. At this last town there was opposition from the Snapp Bros.' Shows. Enterprise, Oregon, on Thursday of the same week brought packed tents at both performances. At Jerome, Idaho, on 13 August, a cyclone narrowly missed the lot. There was no blowdown but the canvas was lowered and the night show was cancelled.

Dorothy Grizzell, injured in a fall in Boise, Idaho, on 12 August, remained in a hospital in that city. At this time, Austin King, the horse trainer, was still in the hospital at Havre, Montana, where he had been recuperating since 20 July. William Peck was off the show due to an ankle injury but was scheduled to rejoin at Salt Lake City.

Special tribute was awarded to Billy Mack, one of the youngest elephant trainers in the business. She worked the feature number of ten pachyderms and also performed capably in the aerial numbers. At Boise, Ruth went swimming at the Natatorium and drew a huge crowd. Accompanying the elephant were six of the show girls in attractive bathing suits. Steward Whitehouse arranged this stunt



Al G. Barnes lot at Bozeman, Montana, after blowdown, July 16, 1925. Toby Tyler photo in Pfening Archives.



Al G. Barnes lot after blowdown at Big Timber, Montana, July 14, 1925. Toby Tyler photo in Pfening Archives.



The worst of several Al G. Barnes blowdowns during the 1925 season came at Helena, Montana, July 17. Toby Tyler photo in Pfening Archives.



Al G. Barnes open air performance at Choteau, Montana, July 18, 1925 while big top was being repaired. The spec is in progress. Toby Tyler photo.

in advance and Rex de Rosselli followed up on it from the show. *The Idaho Daily Statesman* published many photos and stories of this event and the whole thing brought the show excellent business.

Rex de Rosselli wrote that Canyon City, Colorado, the first stand after the week's layoff due to floods, proved a bonanza in the nursery department. Born were a zebra, two pumas, three tigers, a Japanese sun bear, a monkey, and two puppies. Perhaps a week's rest from the route that the Barnes' Show was making ended labor in the menagerie. In any event the newly born youngsters were soon added to the display in the menagerie.

Clowns Kinko, Bobby Hamm, and "Shin-ni" Sunberg, of the Sells-Floto Circus, left it at Salt Lake City and joined the Barnes' Circus. Alma and Milt Taylor closed with the Lee Bros. Circus and joined the Al G. Barnes' Show at about the same time. Alma Taylor, well-known big cat trainer, took over the puma act (replacing Helen Roth) and also rode menage while Milt worked in clown alley and did the "come-in" as a clown policeman.

The Al G. Barnes' Circus entered Oklahoma at Nowata on 15 September, but its tour in that state was strongly opposed by the Sparks Circus and the Hagenbeck-Wallace Circus. The former made stands in Oklahoma from August 19 through the 26th, and then again from September 7 through

the 12th. The Corporation show was in the same state from September 2 through the 11th. Barnes played the state from 15 September through the 26th with one day during that period in Arkansas at Fort Smith and one day in Texas at Quanah.

Visitors on the show during these early September days were Jake Newman, former circus operator, and Pawnee Bill (Major Gordon Lillie). A newcomer in the box office was Harry F. Wertz, a former white top staff man. Louis Ingleheim joined, and word was received that Austin King had returned to Los Angeles from the Montana hospital and was expected to rejoin the show at an early date.

Al G. Barnes 3 elephant hitch pulling baggage wagon to lot, season of 1925. Lead tusker is Barney. Toby Tyler photo in Pfening Archives.



Information from the Palms quarters related that the lawn in front of the zoo had been transformed into a Japanese garden with an electric water fountain in the center of the bird house. The zoo continued to draw excellent business despite the fact that many tourists had returned home for the summer. It was also reported that ten oil wells were being drilled in the back area of the ranch with two of these already in production. The reader may well wonder if the Palms property was not more valuable to Al G. Barnes than his traveling circus. Further indication of this will be presented in the article dealing with Barnes' affairs in early 1926.

The Al G. Barnes' Circus reached Vernon, Texas, its first stand in that state, on 27 September and by that time the Greatest Show on Earth had toured through the Northwest, along the Pacific Coast, and

through the Southwest and had reached Wichita Falls, in Texas. There was a great deal of visiting between the two shows with Lillian Leitzel, Vernon Reaver, Charles Ringling, Mr. and Mrs. John Ringling, and "Happy Jack" Snelling among the guests at the Barnes' lot. From the Barnes' Circus Mr. and Mrs. Nels Lausten (formerly with Ringling-Barnum), Louis Roth, Betty Kenyon, Klinkhardt's Midgets, John Fowler, Jack Beach, Erna Brown, Jack McAfee, Dick Dixon, James O'Neill and others went to the site of the Big One. Madame Elsie, who had also toured with the Ringling show, gave a dinner party for some of her guests from the opposition.

The Sparks Circus only played a week in Oklahoma and soon departed for the eastern states, but did cause some opposition for the Barnes' show. The Hagenbeck-Wallace Circus was more of a problem since it made nine Oklahoma stands and ten eastern Texas dates in September—most of them ahead of the Barnes' Circus. The Corporation show was more of a problem for Ringling-Barnum, however, since both shows played dates in Dallas and Fort Worth.

At Munday, Texas, on 1 October, one of the unbroken Siberian tigers broke out of its cage as the Barnes' train approached the town. Louis Roth kept the animal under control until the train reached the depot and then coaxed the animal from the train and into the small station office. The tiger was safely caged after a short contest.

Reports from all the shows playing Texas indicated that it was in agricultural trouble with the result being poor business for traveling entertainments. Hagenbeck-Wallace and Sells-Floto reported only fair business and the same was true for the Al G. Barnes' Circus. Ringling-Barnum, which played the large cities, recorded a better financial "take" and Christy Bros. Circus, which was approaching home territory, was expected to do well. The only portion of Texas which returned profitable business this fall as the northeastern section, where the crops were doing well. A good cotton crop had been expected from the rest of the state but a severe hail storm had destroyed it just as the circuses began to arrive. Reports from Louisiana indicated that it could only give good business in certain areas.

The Barnes' Circus remained in Texas from 28 September until 23 October and during that time, near the end of the tour, the show encountered cold weather, which did not help its business. Two baby tigers,



Al G. Barnes spec, *Pocahontas* at the Court of Queen Anne, during open air performance at Sunburst, Montana, July 19, 1925. Toby Tyler photo.

born on the show, were added to Louis Roth's display of twenty baby animals in the center of the menagerie. Doc Cunningham, side-show manager, added Todo, the spider girl and La Belle Marie, with four pythons, to his contingent.

The show left the Lone Star State after the Graham date on 23 October and returned to Oklahoma for three stands, then picked up Shamrock, a Texas town, and played Roswell and Carlsbad, New Mexico. On the last day of the month it was in Pecos, Texas, and then played El Paso on 2 November. Continuing its unusual backtracking route it returned to Lordsburg, New Mexico, after two Arizona stands. At Roswell, Mme. Schumann-Heink and her company again visited the circus. At some time during these late days of the 1925 tour Frank Leggett became elephant superintendent—making three men in this position since the show left quarters.

Following the Lordsburg date, the show made five more Arizona cities and entered California at El Centro on 14 November. It played nine towns in the southern California region before its closing stand at Boyle Heights in Los Angeles on Sunday, 22 November. The Al G. Barnes' 4-Ring Circus played Pasadena, Calif., on the next to the last day of its 1925 tour. The lot was located at the corner of South Marengo and Glenarm Streets Advertising in the *Pasadena Star-News* emphasized the spec, "Joe Martin," the Indian dancers, the sea lion act, and the big elephant act—the latter with a photo which included an elephant with one tusk—probably Vance.

Since Bert Nelson has been noted as one of the feature trainers with the Al G. Barnes' Circus during 1924 and 1925 a brief account of his career is presented as a conclusion to this article. In his youth Nelson learned to train wild animals at the Selig Zoo in Los Angeles. By 1924 he was

working a group of polar bears and "Rex," the riding lion, on the Al G. Barnes' Circus. In 1925 he worked a group of male lions as well as the polar bear act on this show. In 1926 he returned to the Selig Zoo where, in addition to working lion and tiger acts, he developed his famous "wrestling" act with the lioness, "Princess Pat." Once developed, this act became a feature in vaudeville all over the United States. Nelson followed this trail until 1932, and then he worked with MGM films for another two years. In 1935, Nelson signed with Sam Gumpertz to work a large mixed group with the Hagenbeck-Wallace Circus. In 1936 he was with the Al G. Barnes' Circus again and continued on that show in 1937 under its new title Al G. Barnes-Sells Floto. During these years he worked an act similar to the "Princess Pat" turn with a lioness named "Norma." For further interesting details and excellent photos of Bert Nelson the reader should consult the article by Joseph T. Bradbury, "The Old Circus Album," *White Tops*, November-December, 1972.

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CIRCUS WAGON HISTORY FILE

THE BARNUM & LONDON NEW YORK TABLEAUS

by Fred Dahlinger Jr.

Seth B. Howes added a new dimension to the American circus parade in 1864 when he imported several carved tableau wagons from England. Within a decade every American circus of note possessed at least one similar vehicle which, with a bandwagon, formed the nucleus of the show's daily street parade. The Howes vehicles were quite small by later standards, but what they lacked in size they more than overcame in decoration. A mass of carved roccoco scrolls and figures literally covered the entire surface of these units, testifying to their costliness. Later American-built units were much simpler and featured fewer but larger carved elements.

The earliest American tableau wagons followed the lines of the Howes vehicles,

The Barnum and London Circus commissioned a classic group of lithographs from Strobbridge to advertise their parade in 1882. This poster, one of that series, shows tableau number 47/51 at the top, and the wagon believed to have been destroyed in the 1887 Bridgeport winter-quarters fire at the bottom. Original lithograph at the Cincinnati Art Museum.

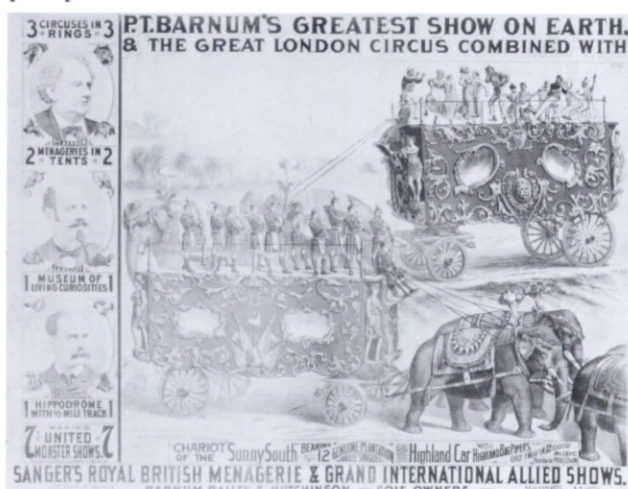
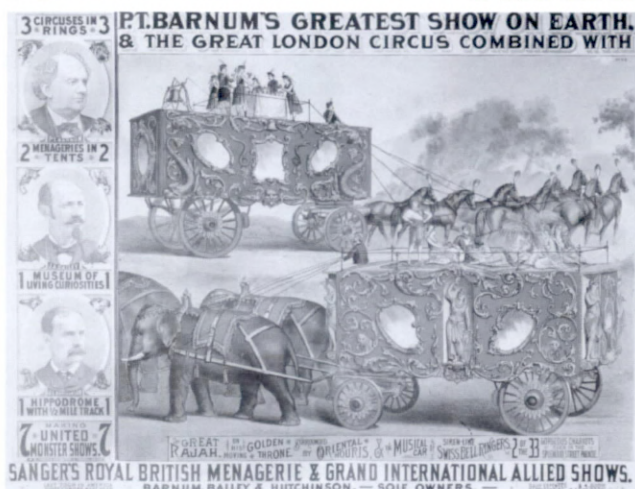
many of them being constructed with layers, like a wedding cake, in which the sides of upper levels were recessed from the layers below. Tableaus of this style were used in the 1870s by the Forepaugh, Barnum, Cooper & Bailey, Cole, and Robinson circuses, based upon surviving photographs and engravings. Although enclosed box or semi-enclosed box-shaped wagons dated back to the 1850s, there is no clear evidence of box-shaped tableaus until about 1880. The earliest dateable illustration of a series of such vehicles is an 1879 Great London lithograph at the Circus World Museum, on which the show's parade is represented. Among the vehicles depicted was a series of four box-style tableaus upon which live displays were presented. They were given the illustrious names of "Oriental Car of the Rajah," the "Massive Car of Caledonia," the "Pageant Chariot of King Rex" and the "Golden Car of Jubilee." Each had its sides covered with carvings and mirrors, and at least one had corner figures, or "images," as some showmen called them.

By 1880 Forepaugh may have had a set of three box tableaus, perhaps the ones

present in Forepaugh photographs of the 1888-1890 period. W.W. Cole also had three, each a different color (white, red, and gold) which were offered for sale in 1886. Thus, the appearance of four carved box tableaus on the Barnum & London circus in 1882 was not precedent-setting but simply a continuation of a practice already present in the American circus industry.

The city of their origin provided a nickname for the tableaus, two of which were used in Barnum & London and Barnum & Bailey parades from 1882 through 1904. The wagons were probably built by Fielding, the firm which provided most of the vehicles acquired by the Barnum show in the 1880s. The carvings attached to the bodies, in particular the corner figures, undoubtedly came from Samuel Robb's carving shop. Their location of manufacture led to their designation as the New York Tableaus as early as 1886. The show's route book of that year listed the names of the drivers of the four horse teams, including four for these tableaus. Their bodies were then painted green, red, white, and blue. All four units are illustrated in the remarkably accurate series of lithographs issued by the show in 1882. These likenesses provided the original basis for their alignment with the Barnum circus, sustained by the

Another poster from the 1882 group depicts number ?/50 tableau at the top of the scene, and the number ?/49 wagon at the bottom. Original lithograph at the Cincinnati Art Museum.





Number 49 tableau on the Frank A. Robbins All Feature Shows, ca. 1910. Pfening Archives.

later discovery of photographs placing two of the series on the show in the 1890s.

One of the four, the one with a female figure in the center of the body, was probably destroyed in a fire which consumed the show's animal barn at the Bridgeport winterquarters the evening of November 20, 1887. The *Clipper* of December 3, 1887, reported the loss of a "Tableaux of New York," leading to this conclusion. By coincidence, this fourth tableau is the only one which appears in a set of stereopticon slides showing the Barnum parade at Janesville, Wisconsin, in 1886. The details which can be seen in those photos agree with the illustration in the 1882 lithograph. The remaining three were all utilized in the painted pictorial parade of 1892-1893 in which painted banners were affixed to the sides of the show's tableau dens. This account of the three indirectly verifies the loss of one in 1887.

The following remarks cover the three tableaux which existed well into the twentieth century. At different times they were identified by two numbers, the second resulting from a renumbering scheme implemented when Barnum & Bailey was in England in 1899.

#49—The early number for this tableau is not known. The featured decoration on the side was a carved array of flags between two horizontally disposed mirrors. In the 1892-93 parade it carried an arrangement depicting the Declaration of Independence display. The only known photo of this tableau on the Barnum show appears in a 1901 Berlin parade scene, by which time its corner statues had been removed. It was sold off the show to Frank A. Robbins, about 1906, and appears in an undated Robbins parade photo.

#50 and #47/51—These two tableaux shared a common history and will be covered together. #50 had two oval mirrors on the side with a carved animal head located on a carved setting between them. Three mirrors formed the central decoration of #47/51, each end being filled by a carved fish or aquatic creature. Both wagons had four corner statues fitted on them which, for reasons unknown, were temporarily removed in the early 1890s. Neither wagon had a skyboard in its ori-

ginal configuration, but by the late 1890s #50 was fitted with a pair which were identical to those fitted on the ex-Howes elephant telescope and tableau den 66/84. In the 1892 and 1893 parades the tableaux carried the Pocahontas-John Smith and Landing of the Pilgrims displays respectively. Both units went to Europe with Barnum & Bailey from 1898 to 1902. Utilized in the parades of 1903 and 1904, they were apparently stored at Bridgeport winterquarters until January 1909 when they were sold to John H. Garrett. The tableaux cost Garrett \$250 each but never made it on the road as Garrett's initial attempt as a circus owner never left the barn.

The wagons came into the possession of William P. Hall, the Lancaster, Missouri, horse trader and circus equipment dealer who quickly placed them on Fred Buchanan's Yankee Robinson Circus. During their years with Yankee Robinson the corner statues were removed from the wagons and the finely carved skyboards fitted to #50 in the 1890s were placed on #47/51. A new pair of skyboards fitted with miscellaneous carvings were placed on #50, but these were later replaced by a simple skyboard painted with the show's title. Buchanan later placed small winged heads on

Former John Robinson tableau number 55 on the Veal Bros. Carnival in 1919. The corner statues had been removed by the Robinson show sometime before 1911.

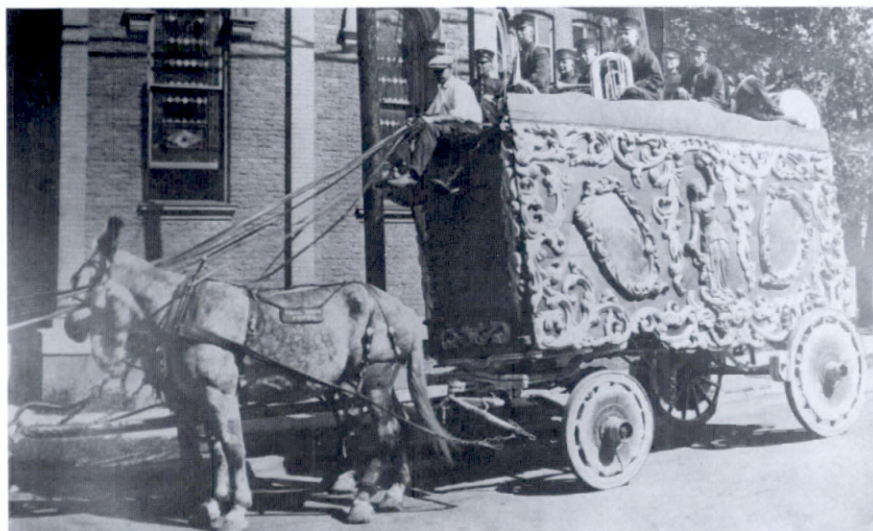


Tableau number 50 on the Barnum and Bailey Circus with Scots bagpipe band atop. This wagon later paraded on Fred Buchanan's Yankee Robinson Circus. Albert Conover Collection.

the front corners of #50, the same decoration used on the gables of a cottage cage type ticket wagon he owned before 1910. The end of #50 is not recorded, but it was still on Buchanan's show as late as 1916. #47/51 remained with the Yank outfit until the show passed via Hall into the hands of Jerry Mugivan and Bert Bowers in the fall of 1920. A reorganization at Lancaster during the winter resulted in the wagon being left at the Hall farm. A new show, called Palmer Bros., left the farm in 1921 and this tableau went with it. A poor season for John T. Backman and Al Tinsch, the owners of the new enterprise, forced the sale of the show. Mike Golden and Milt Runkle bought it, renaming the show Howes Great London in 1922 and Golden Bros. in 1923. By this time only the carved dragons and mirror frames existed on the wagon sides, the remaining carving which filled in the open spaces having been deleted. In September 1924 the Golden Bros. assets were acquired by George W. Christy

This tableau is similar to the Barnum show New York Tableau which was probably lost in the 1887 winterquarters fire. Albert Conover Collection.

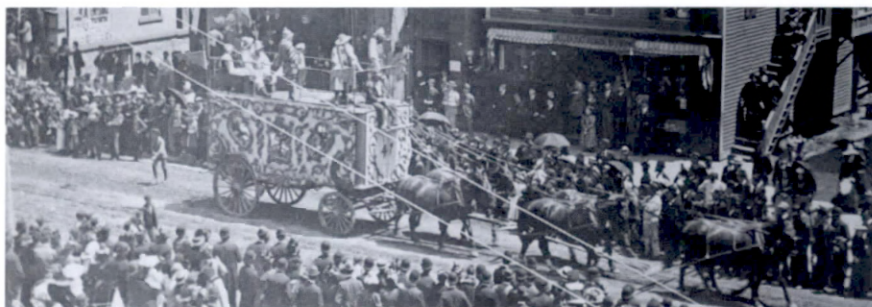


Tableau 47/51 in a Barnum and Bailey parade in New Britain, Connecticut, May 26, 1893. Albert Conover Collection.

but it is not known if Christy's purchases included this wagon. If it did, there is no proof that Christy ever used it on any of his circuses.

Some historians have suggested that the fourth tableau may not have met its end in the 1887 fire but was sold off to parties unknown. The theory was suggested in part by the existence of a tableau on the John Robinson circus which bore a reasonable likeness to the missing vehicle. Fitted with corner statues, a feature found on only one other Robinson wagon, the tableau cannot be aligned with the Robinson show until 1902, when it appears in a set of parade photos taken at Ashtabula, Ohio, on May 16. On the Robinson circus the wagon was numbered 55.

It is our belief that the Robinson wagon may have originally been on the W.C. Coup circus, in company with a bandchariot which also served on the Robinson circus in the 1890s and 1900s. This bandchariot, number 51 on Robinson, had carvings which are similar in style to those on the Robinson tableau. Additionally, a tableau with a central figure and pointed mirrors is

The corner figures from the Robinson tableau, shown here as displayed today at the Miami County Court House in Peru, Indiana, were not as detailed as those on the 1882 Barnum and London wagons, but they were properly proportioned and added a fine touch to the wagon's appearance. Author's photo.



illustrated in a Coup advertising cut of c. 1880, the same cut which showed a steam wagon that definitely existed in a form quite similar to that depicted. Significantly, the corner figures on the Coup tableau were pipers, the same type of figures present on the Robinson tableau.

One hallmark of the vintage of the Robinson #55 was the driver's seat arrangement. Unlike later wagons in which the driver sat on the wagon roof and rested his feet on a footboard suspended from the wagon front, the Robinson vehicle had a seat apparatus which was completely in front of the wagon body. The arrangement dates to the early 1880s and can be found on other wagons of similar vintage such as the Forepaugh calliope. But the Robinson show drivers didn't use it as it was intended, preferring to sit on the roof and using the original seat as a footrest. The corner figures were removed from the Robinson

tableau by 1910 and placed in storage, perhaps inside the wagon itself. On March 6, 1916, the wagon, together with the rest of the Robinson show, was purchased by Jerry Mugivan and Bert Bowers, who quickly sold the wagons to Ben Wallace. Wallace sold the tableau to the Veal Brothers railroad carnival in July 1919, where it faded into oblivion after a couple of years. Remarkably the corner statues survived as a group in the Peru area, and about 1935 were placed on display in the Miami County Courthouse Museum, where they can still be seen today.

The style of carving on the Robinson tableau is distinctly different than that of the two Barnum tableaus for which good photos are available. The scrolls on the former are rather thick and full whereas those on the latter are delicate and fine. Another difference was the corner statue placement. On the Robinson tableau the figures were mounted on the front and back panels, facing straight forward and backward, whereas on two of the Barnum tableaus they were situated at 45-degree angles in niches. Furthermore, in the 1886 Janesville, Wisconsin, photo of the fourth New York tableau, the corner figures are women, not pipers. Regardless, the corner figures on the Robinson tableau came from the same New York shop as those fitted on the Barnum series. Folk art authority Fred Fried recently identified them as typical Robb figures in a personal communication with the author.

The History of The Circus in Australia has been written!!!!

It is called *Spangles & Sawdust: The Circus in Australia* and is written by Mark St Leon, a direct descendant of Australia's pioneering circus family. This is the first detailed and authoritative account to be written of the circus in this country. It traces the history of the Australian circus from its English origins, thru the creation of the first amphitheatres around 1850, the gold rush era and the subsequent rise of the great tenting circuses.

Of special interest to American circus enthusiasts and historians are the details given of the visits to Australia in the late 1800s of the biggest American circuses. And where did the great May Wirth and the renowned Con Colleano come from? Why, Australia of course!

What the critics said:

"...a labour of love..." *The Australian* (National Daily)

"...done with diligence and an easily read style..." *The Age* (Melbourne)

The price is the *Australian dollar equivalent* of US \$19.95 and includes exchange charges, packing and surface mail to US. For two or more copies please deduct 10% from total purchase price.

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172/392 Jones Street
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Australia

HERR DRIESBACH LORD OF THE BRUTE CREATION

by Stuart Thayer

Sharon, New York, is a tiny place 40 miles west of Albany. In 1845, it had about 15 dwellings. It was not large enough to be visited by Ogden, Weeks & Co.'s Grand Menagerie, so when the star performer of the show expressed a desire for an appearance in his home town, the caravan played the county seat, Schoharie.

"Early in the morning of June 4th," a local historian has written, "people from Schoharie and vicinity gathered in the village to await the arrival of the show, and particularly to see and greet their former townsman, who was making his first appearance with his menagerie in his home town."

Jacob Driesbach had left Schoharie County about 1830. He had been born on a farm near Sharon on November 2, 1807. His grandparents had settled there from Germany. Orphaned at 11, Driesbach was taken in by his uncle, Philip Driesbach, who had a farm on the Albany Road, two miles east of Sharon. Shortly thereafter, he was apprenticed to Christian Keyser, a shoemaker. He followed that trade until he was in his early twenties. Then he moved to New York City and became a policeman. After that, he entered the employ of a menagerie. At some time prior to 1842, he took up the trade of lion trainer.

To continue the account of June 4, 1845, "... about ten o'clock, a.m., four large elephants were seen coming over the hill west of the village, followed by a number of wagons drawn by gray horses. It was an imposing spectacle. Reaching the valley, the procession was formed for the grand entrance to the village. About 11 o'clock, the procession under the direction of Herr Driesbach, started towards the village amid the music of the band and the shouts of the people who nearly blocked the street, and proceeded to the exhibition grounds in the rear of the Methodist Church.

"The performance started at 1 o'clock, p.m. The admission was twenty-five cents, no half-price. So great was the crowd which came to see Herr Driesbach that, after the tent was filled, the sides were thrown open to make room for the overflow crowd. It is said that the attendance reached 4,000. He was well pleased with the enthusiasm with which his friends greeted him and his acts, while they were amazed at the wonderful feats he performed with his animals. They could hardly believe that this was their old friend 'Jake.'"

Driesbach was famous not only in Schoharie County. His ability to master his lions and tigers and leopards had made him a celebrity throughout America. His actions, be they misfortunes such as attacks by his cats or accounts of his appearances, were printed in the press and copied from

paper to paper. In fact, so often was one or another of his adventures in print that the *New York Clipper* once hinted that it was advertising bunkum.³ He was a protege of the most aggressive advertiser of the period, James Raymond, so it is not beyond reason that a certain amount of what we now call "manipulation of the media" was practiced.

The two most famous American wild animal trainers have been Isaac Van Amburgh and Clyde Beatty. All others, no matter how successful or talented, have worked in their shadows. Van Amburgh's name was before the public for 95 years; Beatty's still is, after 60. Such celebrity is a difficult thing with which to compete. Jacob Driesbach played second fiddle to Van Amburgh for 15 years.

We have no way to measure either man's competence in modern terms. Suffice it to say that the accolades they both received are enough to convince us of their superiority over their contemporaries. Driesbach, coming upon the scene later than Van Amburgh, was often compared to his predecessor, yet he was more often than not the beneficiary of these measurements. Driesbach rose to notoriety during the period when Van Amburgh was in Europe (1836-1845), and thus had no real competition in the United States during the first four seasons he performed. Working as he did for James Raymond, the pre-eminent menagerie operator of the period, was of decided benefit to his career.

He was 35 years old when his name first

appeared as a lion trainer (Van Amburgh was 26 at the time of his debut). This was at Thomas Hamblin's Bowery Theatre in New York in May, 1842. The play was titled "The Lion of the Desert," and in it Driesbach played the part of an Arab outcast attacked by a tiger (in Africa!). What it amounted to was a wrestling match between man and beast and Driesbach used the same format as part of his menagerie act for some years thereafter. During the run of the play, Driesbach was attacked by his cats and accounts of the event appeared in newspapers across the country. He was not badly injured, but the copy helped spread his name.

We do not know what connection, if any, James Raymond had with the play at the Bowery, but in July, after it had closed, Driesbach joined Raymond, Ogden & Co.'s New York Menagerie at McCarran's Garden in Philadelphia. It was his first appearance under canvas. The show visited New England and New York and ended the season in Philadelphia, where they exhibited until January 23.

The 1843 edition of the menagerie was called Raymond, Weeks & Co.'s Zoological Exhibition. This was the one on which the famous four-elephant hitch first appeared.⁴ They opened in Philadelphia and went to New York, where they were ensconced from the 12th to the 27th of May. An article appeared in the *New York Atlas* of May 28, complete with a woodcut of Driesbach attired in a headdress of ostrich feathers and a sleeveless shirt made of animal skin.

The triumph of man over beast. Driesbach subjugates a jaguar in a rare daguerreotype from the 1840s. This may be the earliest surviving photographic image of an American circus or menagerie performer.

former. Original in Floyd and Marion Rinhart Collection, The Ohio State University, Department of Photography and Cinema/Library for Communication and Graphic Arts.



RAYMOND & WARINGS

GRAND

Zoological Exhibition



TRIUMPHAL ENTRY

Of the Cavalcade into each town, preceded by the costly
ROMAN BAND CHARIOT,

Drawn by two Tremendous Elephants.

This magnificent Car, outvies in beauty and splendor anything of the kind ever beheld. It is twenty feet long and seven feet wide, and as high as the Pavillion of Napoleon, or the tent of Richard III on Bosworth Field. In front it presents two Herculean Figures, one representing Neptune blowing his Sea shell, the other, that of the Colossus of Rhodes bearing an emblem of Heathen Mythology. The whole Chariot is composed of statuary, and is literally covered with gold; the pannels are adorned with appropriate painting. The tout ensemble is perfect, and is surmounted by an immense and gorgeous canopy, supported by two Giraffes, and adorned with gold and silken tapestry, in the apex of which is perched the AMERICAN EAGLE.

Will be exhibited at DAYTON,

On Tuesday April 13, 1847.

From 1 to 4 P. M. FOR ONE DAY ONLY.

Raymond & Waring would announce to the people of the west that they will now have an opportunity of seeing the celebrated, brave and powerful

HERR DREISBACH,

With his highly trained LIONS, TIGERS and LEOPARDS, He stands at the head of all TAMERS OF WILD BEASTS, and has been styled by critics the "Lion King," as he has exposed his life before this in subduing the largest and most terrible Lion ever caught, this animal is at present in his possession and has repeatedly saved his life, when exercising the other beasts in the performing cage. DREISBACH's pet Tiger's feats, together with those of the Lion and Leopards, have been beheld and admired by millions; he actually drives a WILD LION, harnessed to a car, thus showing the supreme majesty of man above the brute.

In spite of having his name misspelled, Driesbach was still the headliner on the western unit of Raymond and Waring in 1847. From the *Dayton Journal and Advertiser*, Dayton, Ohio, of April 6, 1847.

On his lap sat a jaguar. Unfortunately, the picture cannot be reproduced.

"We have had Van Amburgh, and he

was thought a wonder," the article read. "Carter, the lion tamer, followed, and he was accounted more wonderful than Van Amburgh; but now we have Driesbach, who is the most wonderful of all." He had so "civilized" his lions, the writer said, that he was able to ask them to dinner.

"You must imagine a large cage, in which a greater congregation of animals than Daniel encountered is assembled. In the center is a table and around it are placed stools—Driesbach, as the host, takes the place of honor. [The animals] wait in the most patient manner until they are helped and do not dream of swallowing their food as if their existence depended upon getting it down in a few seconds."

"Well, this assuredly is impressive," wrote C.G.D. Odell of the description and added that Driesbach would harness a lion to a cart and drive it over a road erected in the pavilion, as well as do the slave and tiger wrestling bit.⁵

Excepting the dining room business, these animals were not separated from the audience by anything more than Driesbach's control over them. With this in mind, one forms an entirely different view of the uniqueness of his performance.

An article in the *Hartford Daily Courant* of June 7, the day the show opened a two-day stand there, admitted to some apprehension about this.

"A green cloth was spread before the cages in the open tent (parlous work, I thought, among such tender meat as 200 children) and out sprang a full-grown tiger who seized the gentleman [Driesbach] by the throat. A struggle ensues in which they roll over and over on the ground and finally the victim gets the upper hand and drags out his devourer by the nape of the neck. I was inclined to think once or twice that the tiger was doing more than was set down for him in the play, but as the Newfoundland dog of the establishment looked on very quietly, I reserved my criticism."

He added, "Herr Driesbach stood at the door to bow us out, a fine, handsome, determined-looking fellow he is."

The public performance consisted of Driesbach's battle with the tiger, his caged act, elephant rides in the ring aboard the great Siam, and the appearance, the first one we have documented, of a snake-charmer. Otherwise, one's quarter entitled one to examine the menagerie, a matter of 15 to 20 cages.

In 1844 the caravan, titled Raymond & Co. since midyear 1843, was enlarged to 30 wagons and 100 animals. After a winter show in Baltimore, they opened in Philadelphia on April 11. The tent was 200 x 80. A Miss Moore was part of Driesbach's act in Baltimore. We have found no earlier reference to a woman in a wild-animal act. However, she was not advertised during the road season; perhaps she didn't take to the life.

Driesbach was described in the *Albanian* of Albany, New York, as being "clad in a beautiful Eastern costume, his head covered with a gorgeous turban, his arms bare and sandals of admirable workmanship on

Raymond & Co. and Herr Driesbach's Menageries!

UNITED IN ONE LARGE AND VARIED EXHIBITION,

Consisting of all the RARE ANIMALS now extant,

NUMBERING OVER ONE HUNDRED SPECIMENS,



WILL EXHIBIT AT.....MASON STREET.....NORTH SALEM,
ON FRIDAY, JULY 11, 1851,
OPEN AT 2 AND 7 P. M.
ADMISSION—25 Cents.....CHILDREN, under 10 years, 12 1-2 Cents.

Among this Great collection, which is the largest ever exhibited in America, is
THE RHINOCEROS,
OR—THE UNICORN OF HOLY WRIT!
The first and only one in America, since 1838. The great difficulty in capturing this huge and savage creature, together with the almost impossibility of keeping him alive in a climate so unpropitious to his habits and constitution, renders the Exhibition of a Living Rhinoceros the Greatest Curiosity in the Animal World!—Also a specimen of
HIPPOPOTAMUS!
The only one ever exhibited in America.
TWELVE LIONS—of the finest Specimens from different countries—some of which were presented to the renowned Herr Driesbach by His Majesty Queen Victoria—in his recent tour through Europe.
THE MONSTER ELEPHANT
COLUMBIUS!
The Largest in America—weighing 10,730 Pounds! Also—THE BEAUTIFUL ELEPHANT
TIPPOO SULTAN!
Which has caused such a great sensation over all Europe—will go through a variety of performances, such as Walking; Balancing; Ringing the Bell; Creeping on his Fore-legs; Walking over his Keeper; Picking him up; Drawing a Cart from a Butte.
HERR DRIESBACH,
The most Celebrated of all Animal Performers! will give no exhibition
In a Den of Wild Animals!
His Performances, with the Terrible Groups of LIONS—TIGERS—LEOPARDS—COUGARS—PANTHERS, etc.
The same as performed by him in all the principal Cities of Europe, with such great success.
HERR DRIESBACH, the Lion Tamer!
will give his Performances in a
DEN OF WILD ANIMALS!
separate, and altogether different from Herr Driesbach's—making the Grand Animal Performance in the same exhibition!
Many other Performances will be given in the course of the Exhibition—such as FOXES, MONKEYS, etc. A full description of the Animals—which the great experience, enterprise, and resources of the Proprietors have enabled us to bring together, in one
LARGE AND SPECTACULAR COLLECTION,
will be found in the Bill, at the Principal Hotels, previous to the arrival of the Company.
J. B. HUNT, Agent.

By 1851 Driesbach's fame was such that his name was included in the title in this newspaper ad from North Salem, Massachusetts. While this ad makes much over Driesbach's European tour, there is no evidence that he ever left the United States. Pfening Archives.

his feet." This sounds like the same costume he wore in the *Atlas* woodcut.

Another title change occurred for 1845, this time to Ogden, Weeks & Co. Driesbach and the four-elephant team were still featured, as was Mlle. Fanny, an "Ourang Outang" and the first of her species to be exhibited by an American menagerie, though not the first one to be shown in this country.

In 1846 Raymond & Waring re-assumed their place in the title of the "Grand Zoological Exhibition." The show had wintered in Zanesville and it spent most of the season in Ohio and Michigan. By this, Driesbach had not repeated a route in his first five seasons. For the first time the proprietors added the words "in connection with Herr Driesbach's Menagerie" to the title, a sign of his fame, to be sure. By this time he was using two performing cages, placing them end-to-end, so as to have the full run of both of them for his act.

The caravan wintered in Cincinnati and it was some time after the first of the year that a Mr. Hawkins took the daguerrotypes that illustrate this article.⁶

Raymond & Waring's Grand Zoological Exhibition for 1847 was made more grand by the acquisition of one of two Stephenson-built fancy bandwagons. Raymond ordered this built in answer to Van Amburgh's importation of the first of these chariots heavily laden with carvings. Oddly, advertising cuts of the period indicate that Driesbach rode in the fancy bandwagon, a la an Eastern potentate, while the band occupied the "Yankee" bandwagon that had served the show previously.

Another lady trainer appeared in 1848, Mlle. Cybelle. She drove the lion hitched to a cart, now in the two-cage set-up rather than loose in the tent. The title in this year was Raymond & Waring and, later, Raymond & Co. To that was appended "And Herr Driesbach's Lions and Tigers." John Shaffer, whose employment by Raymond antedated Driesbach by one year, was still the keeper on one of Raymond's other shows. He never gained the notoriety of "the Herr," as newspapers referred to Driesbach.

In 1849, Raymond & Co. played Ohio again, the third straight season in which Driesbach toured that state. It had become their custom, once in quarters, to send Driesbach's act east to the large cities for a month or so. The show wintered in Zanesville in 1845, 1848, and 1849.

"The Herr" may have been slowing down by 1851. A second keeper appeared with him, one Hideralgo. We have no previous notice of him. The caravan was advertised as "Raymond & Co. and Herr Driesbach's Menagerie." It had twelve lions, a rhinoceros, and two elephants. In this same season, the other Raymond menagerie was called "Raymond & Co. and Van Amburgh's Menagerie." Van Amburgh may have last performed in 1846, but for several years thereafter he apparently travelled with whatever show was graced with his name. In the years 1852, 1853, and 1855 he was again advertised as entering the cages.

We do not know if Driesbach was actually on the payroll of the Welch, Raymond & Driesbach show of 1852. He had not retired, yet there are no references to him in the press accounts that have been found. Raymond, now owning the Van Amburgh title, may have placed more value on the original than on his own man. In 1853, Driesbach's Menagerie and Rivers & Derious' Circus was on tour and Driesbach appeared as a performer. It was during this season that he again visited Schoharie with a show.

The animals from the 1853 effort were switched to the Great Broadway Menagerie for 1854 and Driesbach went with them. This was the first season since 1846 that his name was not in the title of the concern that employed him. In this year he married Sarah Walker, whose father was a farmer near Wooster, Ohio. Driesbach was now 47 years old.

There is no sign of him in 1855, but in 1856 Herr Driesbach's Grand Consolidated Circus and Menagerie appears. Henry Barnum and Hyatt Frost owned the Great Broadway Menagerie of 1854 and might well have owned this 1856 Driesbach opus.

Herr Driesbach & Co.'s Menagerie and S.P. Stickney & Co.'s Circus operated in 1857, but our hero's name was not on the roster of the opening stand in St. Louis. He may have retired temporarily. There is a *Clipper* reference to his leaving the Mabie Circus in Texas in February, 1860, and another to his being with George F. Bailey in 1863 (at some stands, his name was in the title). An 1868 combination advertised it-

**Welch's National Circus,
RAYMOND & CO AND DRIESBACH & CO'S
MENAGERIES UNITED,
FOR 1852.**

G. BERRY,

MANAGER.



**WILL EXHIBIT AT
CARLEISLE, OCTOBER 16th.
HARRISBURG, MONDAY, OCT.
18th, 1852.**

THE public are respectfully informed that these **TWO VAST MENAGERIES**, united for the present season, form by far the largest collection of Living Animals ever exhibited in this or any other country.

Over **150 Animals and Birds** can be seen under their **SPACIOUS PAVILION**, 236 feet in length for **ONE PRICE OF ADMISSION**.

Hours of Exhibition—from 1 to 4 P. M., and 7 to 10 in the evening.

ADMISSION 25 cents. No half price.

The Cortege will arrive in the town on the morning of the 18th instant, about 10 o'clock, and the Carriages, Cages, Van, &c., containing the Animals,

Drawn by 120 Splendid Horses!

HEADED BY

Neuper's Philadelphia Brass Band!

Will pass through the principal streets, affording an opportunity of beholding one of the most

GORGEOUS AND IMPOSING PROCESSIONS

of the kind ever seen.

A Double Performance in 3 Immense Performing Dens!

HERR DRIESBACH in **TWO** and **Signore HIDERALGO** in the other.

In the course of each exhibition, **HERR DRIESBACH**, the far famed **LION KING**, will enter the **Dens** of his Wild tenants of the Forest—

Lions, Leopards, Tigers, Cougars, &c.

And give a display, the same as when ordered by the special command of **Queen Victoria**, **Louis Phillip** (late King of the French), **Emperor Nicholas** of St. Petersburg, and the **Royal Family** of **Hapsburg** House of Austria.

SIGNORE HIDERALGO, will also perform his highly trained animals, separate and entirely different from **Herr Driesbach's**, showing the different powers of mind over the Animal Creation.

WELCH'S NATIONAL CIRCUS.

FROM **NIBLO'S**, NEW YORK, AND **NATIONAL AMBULATEUR**, PHILADELPHIA.

J. G. CADWALADER,

Equestrian Director.

J. LANGWORTHY,

Master of the Circle.

R. WILLIAMS,

1st Buffo Clown.

E. DAVIS,

2d Shakapereah Clown.

Among the most prominent of the artists may be found the following names, viz:

J. G. CADWALADER, the unsurpassed **Four and Six Horse Rider**.

In 1852 Driesbach was heavily advertised by the awkwardly named **Welch's National Circus, Raymond & Co., and Driesbach & Co. Menageries United**. A question exists whether he actually travelled on the show as he is not mentioned in afterblasts. From the **Harrisburg, Pennsylvania, Democratic Union** of October 13, 1852. Pfening Archives.

self as **Herr Driesbach Menagerie** and **Howes' Transatlantic Circus**, but again, there is no evidence that he accompanied it. **Frank Howes** and **Lyman Hitchcock** were the owners.

He may have leased the use of his name or have given up the rights to it long before. We do not know how those legalities were handled in the early days.

In its issue of September 30, 1876, the *Clipper* printed the news that Driesbach was living in retirement in **Apple Creek Station, Ohio**. **Jacob Driesbach** died on December 5, 1878, at the age of 71. He left a widow and one son.

Despite the fact that he was heavily promoted by the Raymond interests and that our conceptions of early nineteenth-century performers are colored by unsophisticated critics, it would seem that Driesbach was an outstanding practitioner of his art. No one else is on record as presenting wild animals unconfined by cages; few other performers received as much newspaper copy; in reviews he fared well in comparison with his predecessor, **Van Amburgh**. It would appear that **Jacob Driesbach** should be accepted as one of the two premier animal trainers of his day and as one of the very top performers in field show history.

Footnotes

1. Joseph R. Brown, Jr., "Herr Driesbach, Lion Tamer from Schoharie County," *County Historical Review* (November, 1948), p. 15.
2. Ibid.
3. *New York Clipper*, 18 July 1857, p. 102.
4. Stuart Thayer, "James Raymond's Four Elephant Team," *Bandwagon*, 27:4 (1983), p. 30.
5. George C.D. Odell, *Annals of the New York Stage* (15 vols.), Columbia University (New York, 1949), Vol. 4, p. 676.
6. *Religious Recorder* (Syracuse, New York), 25 February 1847.

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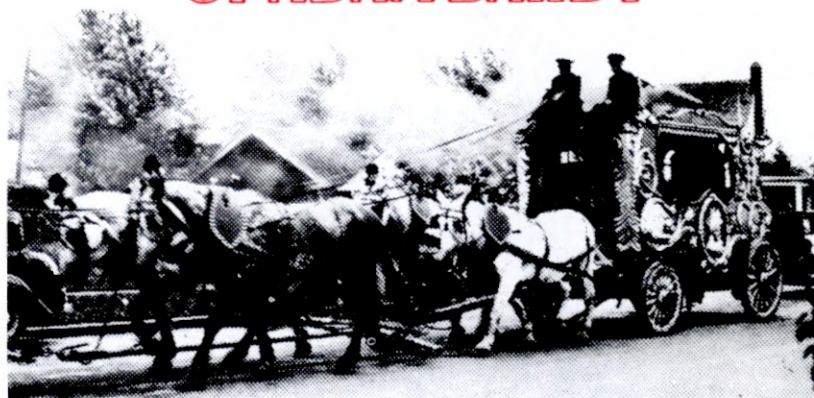
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